



ریاکاری (English)

SHOWING OFF



Presented by

Majlis Al-Madina-tul-'Ilmiyyah

Translated into English by

Majlis-e-Tarajim (Dawat-e-Islami)

ریا کاری

Riyā Kārī



SHOWING OFF

Harms and cures of showing off

Presented by

Majlis Al-Madina-tul-'Ilmiyyah

Department of Reforming Books

Translated into English by

Majlis-e-Tarajim (Dawat-e-Islami)

Showing Off

An English translation of 'Riyā Kārī'



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الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ
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Du'a for Reading the Book

Read the following Du'a (supplication) before you study a religious book or an Islamic lesson, you will remember whatever you study, إِنَّ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ:

اللَّهُمَّ افْتَحْ عَلَيْنَا حِكْمَتَكَ وَانْشُرْ
عَلَيْنَا رَحْمَتَكَ يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

Translation

Yā Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! Open the doors of knowledge and wisdom for us, and have mercy on us! O the One who is the most Honourable and Glorious!

(Al-Mustatraf, vol. 1, pp. 40)

Note: Recite Ṣalāt-‘Alan-Nabī ﷺ once before and after the Du'a.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ
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Translator's Notes

Dear Islamic brothers! Dawat-e-Islami's Majlis-e-Tarājim, a department responsible for reproducing the books and booklets of Amīr-e-Ahl-e-Sunnat founder of Dawat-e-Islami 'Allāmah Maulānā Abu Bilal Muhammad Ilyas Attar Qadiri Razavi رَحِمَهُمُ الْعَالِيَهُ into various languages of the world, is pleased to present the book '*Riyā Kārī*' in English under the title of '*Showing Off*.' Although any translation is inevitably a form of interpretation, we have tried our level best to convey the thought of the author in its true sense. To facilitate the pronunciation of Arabic letters, a transliteration chart has been added. Terms of Islamic Jurisprudence have not been translated as a caution because in most cases, an English word cannot be a full substitute for an Islamic term. However, a glossary has been given at the end of the book, elaborating Islamic terms.

This translation has been accomplished by the grace of Almighty Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, by the favour of His Noble Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ and the spiritual support of our great Shaykh, the founder of Dawat-e-Islami, 'Allāmah Maulānā Abu Bilal Muhammad Ilyas Attar Qadiri Razavi رَحِمَهُمُ الْعَالِيَهُ. If there is any shortcoming in this work, it may be a human error on the part of the *Translation Majlis*, not that of the author of the original book. Therefore, if you find any mistake in it, kindly notify us of it in writing at the following postal or email address with the intention of earning reward (Šawāb).

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13 Intentions for Reading this Book

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has stated: نِيَّةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِهِ
'The intention of a Muslim is better than his deed.'

(Al-Mu'jam-ul-Kabir, vol. 6, pp. 185, Hadīṣ 5942)

Two Madanī pearls

- ❖ Without a good intention, no reward is granted for a righteous deed.
- ❖ The more righteous intentions one makes, the greater reward he will attain.



- 1-4. Every time I read this book, I will start by reciting Hamd¹, Ṣalāt², Ta'awwūz³ and Tasmiyyah⁴ (by reading the Arabic lines given at the top of this page you will be acting on all these four intentions).
5. To the best of my ability, I will read it whilst in the state of Wuḍū and
6. facing the Qiblah.
7. I will behold the Quranic verses,
8. and the blessed Aḥādīṣ

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9. (Whilst reading the book) Whenever I read the name of Allah, I will say “عَزَّوَجَلَّ”,
10. and whenever I read the blessed name of the Beloved and Blessed Prophet I will read “صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَاٰلِهٖ وَسَلَّم”.
11. I will try to learn Islamic rulings.
12. If I am unable to comprehend any ruling, I will consult (Islamic) scholars for its clarification.
13. If I find any Shar’i mistake in it, I will inform the publisher in writing. (*Verbal information is usually ineffective.*)



Sitting facing Qiblah improves eyesight

Sayyidunā Imām Shafi’ī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ الْقَوِي has said: Four things improve eyesight: (1) Sitting facing the Qiblah (2) Applying kohl before going to sleep (3) Seeing greenery (4) Keeping clothes neat and clean.

(Ihyā-ul-‘Ulūm, vol. 2, pp. 27)

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ
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Al-Madīna-tul-‘Ilmiyyah

From:

Shaykh-e-Tarīqat Amīr-e-Ahl-e-Sunnat, founder of Dawat-e-Islami,
‘Allāmah Maulānā Abu Bilal Muhammad Ilyas Attar Qadiri Razavi
Ziyae داعی بر کائناتہ العالیہ



Dawat-e-Islami, a global and non-political movement for the preaching of Quran and Sunnah, is determined to revive Sunnah and spread righteousness as well as the knowledge of Shari’ah throughout the world. In order to carry out these great and significant tasks in an excellent way, several Majālis (departments) have been formed including the Majlis ‘Al-Madīna-tul-‘Ilmiyyah’ which consists of the ‘Ulamā and Muftis of Dawat-e-Islami. This Majlis has ambitiously taken on the responsibility of serving religion in the areas of knowledge, research and publication. It has the following six departments:

1. Department of books of A’lā Ḥadrat.
2. Department of teaching books.
3. Department of reforming books.
4. Department of translation.
5. Department of scrutiny of books.
6. Department of referencing and documentation.

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The topmost priority of Al-Madīna-tul-‘Ilmiyyah is to present the precious books of A’lā Ḥaḍrat, Imām-e-Aḥl-e-Sunnat, reviver of Sunnah, eradicator of Bid’ah, scholar of Sharī’ah, ‘Allāmah Maulānā Al-Ḥāj, Al-Qārī, Ash-Shāḥ Imām Aḥmad Razā Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ الرَّحْمٰن in an easily understandable way according to the needs of the present age. All the Islamic brothers and sisters should whole-heartedly cooperate in the development of the Madanī work of knowledge, research and publication, and study every book published by the Majlis as well as persuade others to do the same.

May all the Majālis of Dawat-e-Islami including Al-Madīna-tul-‘Ilmiyyah progress by leaps and bounds! May Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ bestow success upon us in the worldly life as well as in the afterlife by enabling us to perform each and every good deed with sincerity! May we all be blessed with martyrdom under the green dome, burial in Jannat-ul-Baqī’ and an abode in Jannat-ul-Firdaus.

أَمِينَ بِجَاهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأَمِينِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Muhammad Ilyas Attar Qadiri

Ramadan-ul-Mubārak, 1425 AH

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ
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Necessity of rectifying one's heart

Dear Islamic brothers! The Beloved Prophet ﷺ has stated, 'Beware, there is a piece of flesh in the body, if it is good then the whole body is good, and if it is bad then the whole body is bad. Listen! It is the heart.' (*Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, Kitāb-ul-Īmān, vol. 1, pp. 33, Ḥadīṣ 52*)

The renowned Quranic commentator, Ḥakīm-ul-Ummat Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْكَفَّان has explained this Ḥadīṣ saying: I.e. the heart is a king and the body is its subject, just as a whole country is good if its king is good, the whole human body is sound if the heart is sound. The heart makes intentions and the body tries to act upon them, which is why the honourable mystics applied immense emphasis on the rectification of the heart. (*Mirāt-ul-Manājīḥ vol. 4, pp. 231*)

Ḥujjat-ul-Islam Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad Ghazālī الْوَالِي عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْوَالِي wrote: It is compulsory for you to guard your heart, rectify it and struggle to keep it sound because the matter of the heart is more dangerous than all other limbs, and its influence is greater than that of the rest. (He عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْوَالِي also wrote): There is a special relationship between a human's physical actions and his inner characteristics. If your inner self is corrupt then your outer actions will also be corrupt. If your inner self is free from vices such as jealousy, showing off, arrogance etc. then your outer actions will also be admirable. If a man considers his good deeds to be accredited to the grace and mercy of his Creator عَزَّ وَجَلَّ then that is fine, but if he believes that they are due to his personal excellence then this self-conceit will ruin those deeds. For this reason, your outer physical deeds cannot be rectified you have acquired knowledge of the relationship between your inner characteristics and your, outer actions, and the effect of the former on the latter, and the method of protecting your outer actions through your inner attributes. (*Minḥāj-ul-ʿĀbidīn, pp. 13, 67*)

Showing Off

One of the inner sins is ‘showing off’, which is the topic of this book. ‘Showing Off’ has been compiled with the help of *Iḥyā-ul-‘Ulūm*, *Ḥadīqah Nadiyyah*, *Az-Zawājir*, *Fatāwā Razawiyyah*, *Bahār-e-Sharī‘at*, *Faizān-e-Sunnat* and other books. In this book, an attempt has been made to present the reader with the information about showing off in an easy manner with appropriate sections and references so that even less qualified readers can benefit from it. However, as knowledge is a very difficult thing, it is not possible to remove all intellectual difficulties, therefore one should consult Islamic scholars دَامَتْ نُفُوسُهُمْ in case of not understanding anything.

In order to, save yourself from showing off, it is highly effective to listen to ‘Hide Good Deeds’, ‘Sincerity’, ‘Key of Acceptance’, which are recorded speeches by Shaykh-e-Ṭarīqat, Amīr-e-Ahl-e-Sunnat, ‘Allāmah Maulānā Muhammad Ilyas Attar Qadiri دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمُ الْعَالِيَهُ and ‘How do We become Sincere?’ by Amir-e-Ahl-e-Sunnat’s son Maulānā Abū Usayd Aḥmad ‘Ubayd Razā Al-‘Aṭṭārī Al-Madanī مَدَّ ظِلُّهُ الْعَالِي, and ‘Showing off and it’s Cure’ which is a VCD speech by Nigrān-e-Shūrā (Dawat-e-Islami) Ḥājī Muhammad ‘Imrān ‘Aṭṭārī مَدَّ ظِلُّهُ الْعَالِي.

Do not just read this very important book yourself but encourage other Muslims to read it as well and in return you will earn the reward for spreading the invitation towards righteousness. We pray to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ that He عَزَّوَجَلَّ make us regularly practice the Madanī In‘āmāt and travel in Madanī Qāfilāhs in order to ‘*strive to reform ourselves and the people of the whole world*’.

أَمِينَ بِجَاهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأَمِينِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Department of Reforming Books

(Al-Madina-tul-‘Ilmiyyah)

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ
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Closeness of Beloved Mustafa ﷺ

Sayyidunā ‘Abdullaḥ Bin Mas’ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ has narrated the following statement of the Prophet of mankind, the Peace of our heart and mind, the most Generous and Kind صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

أَوَّلَى النَّاسِ بِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَكْثَرُهُمْ عَلَى صَلَاةٍ

i.e. On the Day of Judgement the closest person to me would be the one who recited the most Ṣalāt upon me.

(Jāmi’-ut-Tirmizī, Abwāb-ul-Witr, vol. 2, pp. 27, Ḥadīṣ 484)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ



End of people who showed off

Sayyidunā Abū Ḥurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ has narrated that the Prophet of Raḥmah, the Intercessor of Ummah صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ has stated: On the Day of Judgement the first person who will be taken to

account will be a martyr¹. When he will be brought, Allah Almighty will remind him of His favours, which the martyr will acknowledge. After this Allah ﷻ will say, ‘What deed did you do in return for these favours?’ He will reply, ‘I performed Jihad for You until I was martyred.’ Allah ﷻ will say, ‘You are a liar, you performed Jihad so that people would call you a brave man, and so they did².’ Then he will be sentenced to Hell and he will be dragged to Hell on his face and thrown in.³

Then a person will be brought who acquired and imparted knowledge and learnt the Holy Quran. Allah ﷻ will also remind him of His favours and he too will acknowledge them. Then Allah ﷻ will ask him, ‘What did you do in return for these favours?’ He will respond, ‘I acquired knowledge and taught it to others and learnt about the Holy Quran for You.’ Allah ﷻ will say, ‘You are a liar. You acquired knowledge to become known as a scholar and you learnt the Holy Quran so that you would be called a Qārī, and so you were.’⁴

¹ Meaning the first show off to be judged will be a martyr, therefore there is no contradiction between this Ḥadīṣ and the Ḥadīṣ which mentions that the first judgement will be regarding Ṣalāḥ, or a brutally murdered victim. The first worship to be taken to account is Ṣalāḥ, the first of human rights to be questioned about is murder, and the first show off to be judged is a martyr. (*Mirāt-ul-Manājīḥ*, vol.1, pp. 191)

² Meaning in exchange for your battle and martyrdom you gained publicity, which is the reason why you performed Jihad, not to serve Islam. (*Mirāt-ul-Manājīḥ*, vol.1, pp. 191)

³ Meaning with immense humiliation like a dead dog pulled by his legs he will be thrown off the edge of Hell. The depth of Hell is millions of times greater than the distance between the earth and sky. May Allah ﷻ protect us! (*Mirāt-ul-Manājīḥ*, vol. 1, pp. 191)

⁴ All your efforts were not to serve Islam, in fact you used knowledge to acquire fame and fortune, which you gained, now what do you want from Us? Based on this Ḥadīṣ some scholars refrained from writing their names on their authored books, those who did write their names did not do so for the sake of fame in fact they did so to gain supplications from their readers. (*Mirāt-ul-Manājīḥ*, vol.1, pp. 191)

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Thereafter he too will be sentenced to Hell and hence he will also be dragged on his face and then thrown in to the Hell.

Then a wealthy man shall be brought who was granted a lot of money by Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ will remind him of His favours and he too will acknowledge them. Then Allah ﷻ will ask him, ‘What did you do in return for these favours?’ His response will be, ‘I spent my money in Your path wherever it was needed.’ Allah ﷻ will reply, ‘You are a liar. You spent money so that you would be called a generous person, and so you were.’ Then he will also be sentenced to Hell, and he too shall be dragged on his face to Hell and then thrown in. **الْأَمَانُ وَالْحَفِيفُ** (May Allah ﷻ protect us!)

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb-ul-Amārah, pp. 1055, Ḥadīṣ 1950)

Regarding this Ḥadīṣ, Ḥakīm-ul-Ummat Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān **عليه رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ الْوَاحِدَانِ** has mentioned: It has been learnt that just as a sincere deed leads to Paradise, a good deed done to show off leads to Hell and humiliation. Here a martyr, a scholar and generous man, all of whom showed off, have been mentioned, because they performed the best of deeds (apparently). Now if these deeds were ruined due to showing off then what about all other deeds! The same applies to any Hajj, Zakāḥ or Ṣalāḥ performed to show off.

(Mirāt-ul-Manājir, vol. 7, pp. 193)

Beg for sincerity

Dear Islamic brothers! Did you see! The inner disease of showing off left these unfortunate people with nothing! Just ponder! A pious deed like Jihad, a blessing like martyrdom, a pure activity like acquiring and spreading knowledge, a virtuous deed like giving Ṣadaqaḥ and charity, were all ruined because the intention of the one

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doing these actions was to attain the fame of this world instead of seeking the pleasure Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. A man who left his family weeping and sacrificed his life in a battle, failed to reach the blessings of Paradise because his heart contained the desire to be called brave. A wealthy man remained deprived in spite of spending his beloved wealth because he wished to be famous as a generous person. A scholar and Qārī who spent his days and nights to acquire knowledge and the ability to recite the Holy Quran ended up with nothing because he wanted to achieve fame. How sad! Their struggles went to waste and their evil fame-driven intentions made them burn in Hell despite their heavenly deeds.

Dear Islamic brothers! Tremble with fear of the absolute self-reliance of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and humbly beg Him for sincerity.

Mayrā ḥer ‘amal bas Tayray wāsiṭay ḥo

Ker ikhlāṣ aysā ‘aṭā Yā Ilāhī

May my every deed be solely for You

Grant me such sincerity O my Lord

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

O sincerity! Where are you?

Dear Islamic brothers! To start off with, our Nafs and Satan do not let us do good deeds in the first place, and secondly if we do succeed in struggling to do good deeds then our Nafs and Satan try their best to prevent our worship from being accepted. They do this by either making us commit such a mistake in our worship that invalidates it, or the desire for name and fame settles in our heart after we perform worship. Regardless of whether or not anyone talks about our good

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deeds we ourselves (without any valid Shar'ī reason) cannot stop 'blowing our own trumpets' by mentioning our good deeds and hence we end up falling into the trap of show off set for us by Nafs and Satan. For example someone might say, 'Every year I fast in Rajab, Sha'bān and Ramadan!' (even though the fasts of Ramadan are Farḍ anyway, but because this show off observes Nafl fasts for two months, he mentions three months a year in which he observe fast just to increase the weight of his showing off. (وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ

Another person might say, 'I have been fasting on the 13th, 14th, and 15th of every month for many years!' Some people mention the number of Hajj and 'Umrah they have performed. Somebody says, 'I recite Ṣalāt-'Alan-Nabī so many times every day! I have been reciting *Dalāil-ul-Khayrāt* for so long! I recite so much Holy Quran, I donate so much money to such and such Madrasah every month!' In short, Nawāfil, Tahajjud, Nafl fasts and other acts of worships are excessively publicised unnecessarily. How sad! O sincerity where are you? *(Taken from the words of Amūr-e-Ahl-e-Sunnat)*

Nafs-e-badkār nay dil pay yeh qiyāmat tawrī

'Amal-e-nayk kiya bhī to chupānay na diyā

*My evil self-inflicted this destruction upon me
Even when I did a good deed it did not let me hide it*

(Sāmān-e-Bakhshish)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

True success

Dear Islamic brothers! Certainly it is a great privilege to have the ability to perform good deeds, but true success is the acceptance of

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our good deeds in the blessed court of Allah ﷻ. What if we exhaust ourselves in struggling to worship, for example, going to the Masjid to offer Ṣalāh with Jamā'at (congregational Ṣalāh) in severe cold or intense heat, sacrificing our sleep to offer Nawāfil at night, enduring hunger and thirst whilst fasting, donating lots of money in Ṣadaqaḥ, enduring hardship ourselves and sacrificing for others but due to showing off all of these deeds are going to waste without us even realising it? Therefore in order to save our deeds from being ruined we must learn the following things: What is showing off? How can we recognize it? In what ways might we fall into the habit of showing off? Can we call anyone a show off or not? How many kinds of showing off are there and what are their Shar'ī rulings? How can the disease of showing off be cured? Etc.

Gaining knowledge about showing off is Farḍ

Dear Islamic brothers! Gaining knowledge of showing off and its cure is amongst the knowledge which is Farḍ. Hence, A'lā Ḥaḍrat, Imām-e-Aḥl-e-Sunnat, reviver of Sunnaḥ, eradicator of Bid'ah, scholar of Sharī'ah, Maulānā Shāh Imām Aḥmad Razā Khān رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ has written in *Fatāwā Razawiyyah* volume 23, page 624: Gaining knowledge of internal prohibited things (Muḥarramāt-e-Bāṭiniyah), such as arrogance, showing off, conceit, jealousy etc. and their cures is one of the most important Farāḍ for every Muslim.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

What is showing off?

‘To worship with an intention or purpose other than to please Allah ﷻ is showing off.’ For example, to worship with the intention

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of impressing people so that they praise you, respect you and give you money. (*Bahār-e-Sharī'at*, part 16, pp. 233, *Az-Zawājir*, vol. 1, pp. 69)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Levels of showing off

Hakīm-ul-Ummat Maulānā Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān Na'imī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْقَوِي has written: There are many levels of showing off, and for each level there is a different ruling. Some cases of showing off are minor polytheism (Shirk-e-Aṣghar), some are Ḥarām (forbidden), some are Makrūḥ (disliked), some are Ṣawāb (reward). However, whenever showing off is mentioned in general it usually refers to the prohibited type. (*Mirāt-ul-Manājih*, vol. 7, pp. 127)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Save yourselves from showing off

Dear Islamic brothers! Our Glorious Creator عَزَّوَجَلَّ has Himself commanded us to save ourselves from showing off. Hence, in part 16, Sūrah Al-Kahf, Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has stated:

فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ

عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا ﴿١١٠﴾

So whoever hopes to meet his Lord, he must perform good deeds and not assign anyone as a partner in the worship of his Lord.

[*Kanz-ul-Īmān (Translation of Quran)*] (Part 16, Sūrah Al-Kahf, verse 110)

Whilst commenting on this sacred verse the Mufasssīrīn (commentators of the Quran) have written: i.e. One should not show off as this is a form of polytheism. (*Tafsīr-e-Na'ūmī*, vol. 16, pp. 103)

5 Sayings of Mustafa ﷺ regarding showing off being minor polytheism

1. Sayyidunā Maḥmūd Bin Lubayd رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ reported this saying of the Beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ: The thing I fear most for you is minor polytheism. People asked, ‘What is minor polytheism?’ He صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied, ‘Showing off.’

(*Al-Musnad lil Imām Aḥmad Bin Ḥanbal*, vol. 9, pp. 160, Ḥadīṣ 23692)

Dear Islamic brothers! This is the first Ḥadīṣ which refers to showing off as minor polytheism. A polytheist worships with the intention of pleasing his false gods and a show-off (Muslim) worships with the intention of pleasing those who he has falsely made his purpose i.e. he intends to please other people. This is why a show off is a polytheist of a low level and this act of his is polytheism of a low level. Since the belief of a show-off is not corrupt, but his deeds and intentions are, and an open polytheist’s beliefs are corrupt (as well as his actions and intentions), therefore showing off was referred to as minor polytheism. (*Mirāt-ul-Manājīḥ*, vol. 7, pp. 144)

2. Sayyidunā Abū Sa’īd Khudrī رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ said: We were talking about Masīḥ Dajjāl¹, when the Ghayb-knowing Rasūl, the Embodiment of Nūr صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ came and said, ‘Shall I

¹ The appearance of Dajjāl is a sign of the Day of Judgement. For detailed information on this issue please refer to *Bahār-e-Sharī’at* volume 1, part 1, page 120 (published by Maktaba-tul-Madinah).

not inform you of something that I fear for you more than Masīḥ Dajjāl?’ We humbly said, ‘Yes O the Beloved and Blessed Rasūl ﷺ.’ So he ﷺ replied, ‘It is Shirk-e-Khafī (hidden polytheism), a man stands for Ṣalāḥ and prolongs it because someone else is watching him performing Ṣalāḥ.’ (*Sunan Ibn Mājah, Abwāb Az-Zuhd, vol. 4, pp. 470, Ḥadīṣ 4204*)

i.e. If he performs Ṣalāḥ alone, he performs in small number and quickly but when someone is watching him then he offers Nawāfil in a large number and lengthens them.

(*Mirāt-ul-Manājīḥ, vol. 7, pp. 143*)

3. Sayyidunā Shaddād Bin Aws رضى الله تعالى عنه heard the Noblest Prophet ﷺ saying: Whoever fasted to show off has committed polytheism, whoever offered Ṣalāḥ to show off has committed polytheism and whoever gave charity to show off has committed polytheism. (*Shu'ab-ul-Īmān, vol. 5, pp. 337, Raqm 6844*)

Dear Islamic brothers! There are two types of polytheism: (1) Open polytheism (Shirk-e-Jalī) and (2) hidden polytheism (Shirk-e-Khafī). Open polytheism is committed by polytheists and idol worshippers publicly and hidden polytheism is showing off. It can be said that open polytheism is polytheism in creed and showing off is polytheism in deed. This Ḥadīṣ teaches us that it is also possible to show off whilst fasting. Some people whilst fasting rinse their mouths excessively or pour water over their heads and keep saying, ‘Phew! This fast is very hard! I’m

¹ Meaning Dajjāl will be confronted by only specific people, close to the Day of Judgement, and also a person can save himself from Dajjāl by not going anywhere near him thus avoiding his trap, but showing off is a calamity that is faced by all the people all the time, therefore this is a greater calamity than Dajjāl. (*Mirāt-ul-Manājīḥ, vol. 7, pp. 143*)

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very thirsty!’ etc. This is also showing off that one is fasting and this Ḥadīṣ applies to it too.

(*Mirāt-ul-Manājirh*, vol. 7, pp. 14 – summarized)

Şadr-ush-Sharī’ah, Badr-ut-Ṭarīqah, ‘Allāmah, Maulānā Muftī Muhammad Amjad ‘Alī A’zamī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْقَوِي stated in part 16 page 240 of *Baḥār-e-Sharī’at* published by Maktaba-tul-Madīnah: ‘If a Farḍ is performed to show off then the Farḍ will be fulfilled but the person will gain no reward for it due to the absence of sincerity.’

As far as fasting is concerned, the statement of some scholars is that it cannot consist of showing off, most probably means that fasting is to abstain from certain things, so there is no action in it that is performed which could be referred to as showing off. However, it is possible for a fasting person to wander about publicising his fast or for him to make a facial expression to show people that he is fasting. In this way showing off can even be involved in fasting.

4. The Beloved and Blessed Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said on another occasion: Keep avoiding hidden polytheism, which is for a person to perfect his Rukū’ and Sujūd in Ṣalāh for people who are watching.’ (*Shu’ab-ul-Īmān*, vol. 3, pp. 144, Ḥadīṣ 3141)
5. A man saw Sayyidunā Shaddād Bin Aws رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ crying and asked, ‘Why are you crying?’ He رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ responded, ‘I heard something from the Beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ which I remembered and it made me cry.’ (He رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ further said) I heard the Greatest and Holiest Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ say, ‘I fear hidden polytheism and concealed desires for my Ummah.’ I asked, ‘O the Holy Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ will your Ummah

commit polytheism after your departure?’ He صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied, ‘Yes, but they will not worship the moon, sun, stones or idols, rather they will show off in their deeds, and concealed desire is that a man will fast in the morning but then break his fast to satisfy a desire.’

(*Al-Musnad lil Imām Aḥmad Bin Ḥanbal*, vol. 6, pp. 77, Ḥadīth 17120)

Ḥakīm-ul-Ummat Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ الْكَثْرَان wrote: (*He will fast in the morning but then break it to satisfy a desire*) meaning: He would have started his fast but then if he received an invitation for a good meal or someone offered him some juice or drink, he would break his fast for that food or drink, or he intended that he would fast today but when he saw delicious things, his intentions changed merely because of his Nafs and desires. (*Mirāt-ul-Manājīh*, vol. 7, pp. 142)

Madani pearls

1. If you start a Nafl (voluntary) fast deliberately then it is Wājib to complete it. If you break it then it is Wājib for you to repeat this fast (do Qaḍā). (*Durr-e-Mukhtār*, vol. 3, pp. 411)
2. Breaking a Nafl fast unnecessarily is impermissible. If you are a fasting host and your guest will feel upset if you do not participate in the meal with him, or if a host will be upset if his fasting guest does not eat then this is a valid reason to break a Nafl fast, with the condition that he is sure that he can repeat that fast at a later date, and it is a condition for him to break this fast before Ḍaḥwā Kubrā, he cannot break the fast after this. (*Durr-e-Mukhtār*, *Rad-ul-Mukhtār* vol. 3, pp. 413)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

The foolishness of a show off

Dear Islamic brothers! Showing off is such a harmful inner disease that it covers a man's intellect. How foolish is a person who uses ostentatious worship to seek respect, money and popularity from other people, because he preferred these temporary things, which are to end, over the pleasure of Allah ﷻ and His Beloved Prophet ﷺ, and the magnificent blessings and everlasting joys of Paradise. It is as though this man is selling divine reward in exchange for punishment and he is struggling to please creation who cannot even give him any reward for these worships, nor can they give him the blessings of Paradise or save him from torment of Hell! In fact if people discover his intentions in this life then they will begin to hate him.

22 DESTRUCTIONS OF SHOWING OFF

1. A good deed gets wasted

The actions of someone who worships to show off are destroyed. The Holy Quran states:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَبْطُلُوا
صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَىٰ كَالَّذِي يُنْفِقُ مَالَهُ رِثَاءَ النَّاسِ

O People who believe! Do not nullify your charities by boasting of your favours and causing harm – like one who spends his wealth for showing to people.

[Kanz-ul-Īmān (Translation of Quran)] (Part 3, Sūrah Al-Baqarah, verse 264)

2. Friends of Satan

Show offs who spend wealth in order to impress people have been declared the friends of Satan. It is stated in part 5 Sūrah An-Nisā:

وَالَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَكُنِ الشَّيْطَانُ لَهُ قَرِينًا فَسَاءَ قَرِينًا ﴿٣٨﴾

And those who spend their wealth to show off to the people, and do not believe in Allah and nor the Last Day; and whoever has Satan (the devil) as a companion – what an evil companion he is!

[Kanz-ul-Īmān (Translation of Quran)] (Part 5, Sūrah An-Nisā, verse 38)

3. The valley of Hell that will be the destination of those who show off

Unfortunate people who show off with their prayers will reside in Hell. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ states:

فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ ۖ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ ﴿٤﴾ الَّذِينَ هُمْ
يُرَاءُونَ ﴿٥﴾ وَيَمْنَعُونَ الْمَاعُونَ ﴿٦﴾

So devastation is to those offering prayer (Ṣalāh). Those (performers of Ṣalāh) who are neglectful of their Ṣalāh. Those who exercise show off (of their deeds). And do not give (to needy) when they ask for small articles of use.

[Kanz-ul-Īmān (Translation of Quran)] (Part 30, Sūrah Al-Mā'ūn, verse 4-7)

4. Deeds will go to waste

The deeds of fools who prioritise this world over Hereafter will go to waste. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوَفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُبْخَسُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا النَّارُ ۖ وَحَبِطَ مَا صَنَعُوا فِيهَا وَبِطُلْ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

Whoever desires the life of this world and its luxuries; We shall give them the full reward for their deeds in it, and not make any reduction in it. These are the ones for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter except the fire; and all that they used to do there has gone to waste and all their deeds are destroyed.

[Kanz-ul-Īmān (Translation of Quran)] (Part 12, Sūrah Hūd, verse 15, 16)

Sayyidunā Ibn ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُمَا said: This verse was revealed regarding people who show off.

(Rūh-ul-Bayān, Sūrah Hūd, Taht-al-Āyah 15, vol. 4, pp. 108)

5. The regret of show off

The Revered and Renowned Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ stated: On the Day of Judgement the order will be given for some people to be taken to Paradise. When they approach it and smell its fragrance and witness its palaces and Allah’s عَزَّوَجَلَّ blessings therein which are prepared for its residents, an announcer will say, ‘Take them back because they have no share in Paradise’. They will return with such regret that any former or later people have never experienced. They

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will say, ‘O Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ it would have been easier for us if You had thrown us into Hell without showing us those blessings.’ Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will reply, ‘You wretched people! I deliberately did this to you. When you used to be alone you declared war against Me and when you were in public you used to enter in My court in a two-faced way; you did good deeds to show off, but your hearts felt the opposite regarding Me, you loved people but not Me, you respected people but not Me, you abandoned [bad] deeds for the sake of people but not for My sake. Today I will not only deprive you of My reward, I will also make you taste My punishment.’

(Al-Mu’jam-ul-Awsat, vol. 4, pp. 135, Ḥadīṣ 5478 – summarized)

6. Deeds rejected

A show off who endures pains to please people will appear empty-handed in the court of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ on the Day of Judgement. The Beloved and Blessed Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ does not accept any deed of a person desirous of fame, show off, or one who stays involved in fun and amusements.

(Ḥilya-tul-Awliyā, vol. 2, pp. 139, Ḥadīṣ 1732)

The Prophet of Raḥmah, the Intercessor of Ummah, the Owner of Jannah صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ does not accept the deed which has Riyā [i.e. show off] in it even equivalent to a mustard seed.

(Attarghīb Wattarḥīb, Kitāb-ul-Ikhlāṣ, vol. 1, pp. 47, Ḥadīṣ 54)

7. The four names of a show off

A man asked the Beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, ‘What will lead us to salvation in the afterlife?’ He صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied, ‘Do not be disloyal to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.’ He asked again, ‘How can anyone be disloyal

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to Allah ﷺ? He ﷺ replied, ‘In a way that you carry out some commandment given by Allah ﷻ and His Prophet (ﷺ) but with the intention of pleasing someone other than Allah ﷻ. Therefore keep avoiding showing off, because this is associating partners with Allah ﷻ. On the Day of Judgement a show off will be called by four names, ‘O sinner, O deceiver! O infidel! O loser! Your deed was ruined and your reward went to waste, today there is no share for you, O you who attempted to deceive! Now go and seek your reward from whoever you would act for’.

(Az-Zawājir ‘An-Iqtirāf-il-Kabāir, vol. 1, pp. 68)

8. Even Hell seeks protection

The Noblest Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Certainly in Hell there is a valley from which even Hell seeks protection four hundred times every day, Allah ﷻ has prepared this valley for those show offs amongst Ummat-e-Muhammadiyah (the nation of Prophet Muhammad) who have memorized the Holy Quran, who donate for someone other than Allah ﷻ, who perform pilgrimage to Allah’s ﷻ house, and who go out in His ﷻ path.’

(Al-Mu’jam-ul-Kabīr, vol. 12, pp. 136, Ḥadīṣ 12803)

9. Punishment of embarrassment

Someone who makes his acts of worships apparent today in this world in exchange for fame will be humiliated on the Day of Judgement. As the Beloved Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Whoever acts for fame, Allah ﷻ will humiliate him. Whoever shows off with his deeds Allah ﷻ will torment him.’ (Jāmi’-ul-Aḥādīṣ, vol. 7, pp. 44, Ḥadīṣ 20740)

Ḥakīm-ul-Ummat Maulānā Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān Na’imī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْقَوِي commented in regard to this Ḥadīṣ meaning: Whoever

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worships to show people or make them hear his praise then Allah ﷻ will popularise his deeds amongst people in this world or the next but not with respect rather with humiliation. People will hear about his deeds but will hate him. (*Mirāt-ul-Manājīh*, vol. 7, pp. 129)

Āj bantā hūn mu'azziz jo khulay Hashr mayn 'ayb

Ĥāye ruswāyī kī āfat mayn phansū gā Yā Rab

*Today I act dignified, what if on Day of Judgement my
faults are revealed*

Ah! I will fall into the calamity of disgrace my Lord

10. Paradise is Ḥarām for a show off

The Beloved and Blessed Prophet ﷺ said: Allah ﷻ has made Paradise Ḥarām for every show off.

(*Jāmi'-ul-Aḥādīṣ*, vol. 2, pp. 476, Ḥadīṣ 6725)

‘Allāmah ‘Abdur Raūf Manāwī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى commented on this Ḥadīṣ in *Fayḍ-ul-Qadīr Sharḥ-u-Jāmi'-iṣ-Ṣaghīr* saying: ‘Meaning: A show off cannot be blessed with the good fortune of entering Paradise along with the first lucky persons entering Paradise because he occupied himself with trying to please someone who did not even possess the power to benefit or harm him, so he wasted his deed and damaged his religion. Show offs always remain covered with the dirt (of showing off) so they will be thrown into a furnace to clean their filth and impurities. This is why our pious predecessors performed good deeds but then continuously protected the constant sincerity of their intentions due to fear of their worships being rejected.

(*Fayḍ-ul-Qadīr*, vol. 2, pp. 286, Ḥadīṣ 1725)

11. Will not even smell the fragrance of Paradise

When sincere Muslims will be heading joyfully for Paradise wretched show offs will not even smell its fragrance. As the Greatest and Holiest Prophet ﷺ said: The fragrance of Paradise can be smelt from a distance of five hundred years travel but the one who sought worldly possessions with religious deeds cannot smell it.

(Kanz-ul-‘Ummāl, Kitāb-ul-Akhlāq, vol. 3, pp. 190, Ḥadīṣ 7489)

12. A criminal who insults his Creator

The Beloved Prophet ﷺ said: Whoever offered Ṣalāh properly in front of people but badly when alone then he certainly insulted his Creator عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

(Musnad Abī Ya‘lā Al-Mauṣilī, vol. 4, pp. 380, Ḥadīṣ 5095)

Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad Ghazālī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ الْوَالِي explained this saying to us in this way: If a man stands whole day in front of the king, but not with the intention of being close to the king but rather in order to be able to see a maid of the king, this would be an insult to the king. So what would be more contemptuous than for a man to worship Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ with the intention of showing off to one of His feeble bondman who does not possess the power to benefit or harm him. (Iḥyā-ul-‘Ulūm, chapter 2, vol. 3, pp. 369 – summarized)

13. Cursed in the earth and sky

The Prophet of Raḥmah, the Intercessor of Ummah, the Owner of Jannah ﷺ said: Whoever gained worldly benefit from deeds of the afterlife without intending or wanting the afterlife is cursed in the earth and sky.

(Majma‘-uz-Zawāid, Kitāb-uz-Zuḥd, vol. 10, pp. 377, Ḥadīṣ 17948)

14. Final abode of show offs

The Beloved and Blessed Prophet ﷺ said: When any nation adorns itself with (deeds of) the afterlife and beautify themselves for worldly gain then Hell is their final abode.

(Jāmi'-ul-Aḥādīṣ, vol. 1, pp. 183, Ḥadīṣ 1169)

15. Deprivation from the mercy of Allah ﷺ

It is a saying of the Noblest Prophet ﷺ: One who showed off with Allah ﷻ for anyone other than the Almighty has indeed been deprived of the mercy of Allah ﷻ.

(Al-Mu'jam-ul-Kabīr, vol. 22, pp. 320, Ḥadīṣ 805)

16. The one who displeases his Creator ﷺ

The Beloved and Blessed Prophet ﷺ said: If a man stands in a place of showing off and fame he remains in Allah's ﷻ displeasure until he sits.

(Majma'-uz-Zawā'id, Kitāb-uz-Zuḥd, vol. 10, pp. 383, Ḥadīṣ 17664)

*Ger Tū nārāz ḥuwā mayrī ḥalākat ḥogī
Ḥāye mayn nār-e-jahannam mayn jalūn gā Yā Rab*

*If you are displeased then I am doomed
Ah! In Hellfire I will burn O Lord*

17. The consequence of learning knowledge to attain wealth

The Revered and Renowned Prophet ﷺ said: The knowledge that is acquired for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ; he, who acquires it for gaining worldly wealth, will not even be able to smell the fragrance of Paradise on the Judgement Day.

(Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Kitāb-ul-'Ilm, vol. 3, pp. 451, Ḥadīṣ 3664)

18. Facing embarrassment on the Day of Judgement

The Beloved and Blessed Prophet ﷺ said: When humans bring their deeds, show offs will be told, ‘Go to the people who you showed off for and seek your reward from them.’

(Al-Mu’jam-ul-Kabīr, vol. 4, pp. 253, Ḥadīṣ 4301)

19. Deeds will be rejected

The Noblest Prophet ﷺ stated that Allah عزوجل said: ‘I have no partner. Whoever associates a partner with Me in any deed, I will leave him and his association.’ On the Day of Judgement there will be a sealed scripture in Allah’s عزوجل court. Allah عزوجل will say to His angels, ‘Accept these and leave these.’ The angels will reply, ‘O Lord! We swear by Your Glory! We see nothing but goodness in them.’ Allah عزوجل will reply, ‘You are right, but these were not done for My sake and today I will only accept deeds that were done for My pleasure.’ *(Kanz-ul-‘Ummāl, Kitāb-ul-Akhlāq, vol. 3, pp. 189, Ḥadīṣ 7471-7472)*

20. Consequence of a show off Qārī

Sayyidunā Abū Ḥurayrah رضى الله تعالى عنه reported this saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ: Seek Allah’s protection from ‘جُبُّ الْحُزْنِ’ [Jubb-ul-Ḥuzn]! His companions رضى الله تعالى عنهم asked, ‘O the Beloved Rasūl ﷺ what is Jubb-ul-Ḥuzn?’ He ﷺ replied, ‘A valley in Hell that even Hell seeks protection from, a hundred times every day. It is for Qārīs who show off in their actions.’

(Jāmi’-ut-Tirmizī, Kitāb-uz-Zuhd, vol. 4, pp. 170, Ḥadīṣ 2390)

Here the word Qārī refers to irreligious scholars who appear in front of people wearing the garment of piety but mislead them and make them faithless as to take their money in exchange for justifying their

evil deeds and supporting their oppression. Even two-faced scholars who blend into any environment are dangerous. Our Allah ﷻ is one, our Prophet ﷺ is one, our Quran is one and our Ka'bah is one, so our religion should be one as well.

(*Mirāt-ul-Manājīh*, vol. 1 pp. 229)

21. Seek your reward from whoever you acted for

One great disadvantage and downfall for a show off is that when other people will receive rewards for their good deeds and enjoy Allah's ﷻ bounties, the show off will be humiliated in front of everyone. He will be told, 'You did not intend to please Allah ﷻ with your deeds rather you wanted public praise, so go to them and ask them for your reward.' How will they give him anything when they themselves will be in need of good deeds.

Therefore, Sayyidunā Abū Sa'īd رضى الله تعالى عنه narrated that I heard the Beloved Prophet ﷺ saying: When Allah ﷻ gathers all successors and predecessors on the Day of Judgement an announcer will call out: Anyone who made anyone a partner in any deed (i.e. showed off) should seek his reward from that person because Allah ﷻ is free from the association of partners with Him.

(*Jāmi'-ut-Tirmizī, Kitāb-ut-Tafsīr, Sūrah Al-Kaḥf*, vol. 5, pp. 105, Ḥadīṣ 3165)

The renowned Quranic commentator Ḥakīm-ul-Ummat Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ الْعَلِيّ explained this Ḥadīṣ. Meaning: Worship which is done with the intention of pleasing Allah ﷻ, if it is done with the intention of pleasing a human. 'Human' here refers to any worldly human, and this refers to worshipping in exchange for fame, therefore anyone who includes the Holy Prophet's ﷺ pleasure in his intention or anyone who reveals his worships to

other people for the sake of displaying a practical example for them to imitate, is not included in this condemnation.

(Mirāt-ul-Manājīh, vol. 7, pp. 130)

22. A show off has no share in the afterlife

Sayyidunā Ubayy Bin Ka'b رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ reported this saying of the Beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ: Give this nation the glad tidings of light, elevation, and control on the earth, and whoever worships for worldly profit will have no share in the afterlife.

(Majma'-uz-Zawā'id, Kitāb-uz-Zuhd, vol. 10, pp. 376, Ḥadīṣ 17646)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

What will become of us?

Dear Islamic brothers! This is a matter of acute anxiety that if we too are put in the category of show-offs due to our insincerity then what will become of us? How will we endure the calamities of the wrath of our Creator عَزَّوَجَلَّ, deprivation of streams of flowing milk and honey, maidens of Paradise, amazing palaces, and other bounties of Paradise, and humiliation in front of all humanity on the Day of Judgement? Our delicate bodies fear even slight cold or heat, how will they bear the horrific torments of Hell?

Ĥāye! Ma'mūlī sī garmī bhī saḥī jāṭī nahīn

Garmī-e-Ḥaṣhr mayn phīr kaysay saḥūn gā Yā Rab

*Ah! I cannot even bear the slightest heat
How then will I endure the heat of the Day of Judgement O Lord*

The lightest punishment of Hell

Sayyidunā Ibn ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُمَا reported this statement of the Beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ: The person who will be given the lightest punishment in Hell will be made to wear shoes of fire which will make his brain boil. (*Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, vol. 4, pp. 262, Ḥadīṣ 6561*)

Our sensitive body

Dear Islamic brothers! Just think for a second! If we are subjected to this minimum torment of Hell as a punishment for showing off then we will not be able to endure it, because our feet are so delicate that even if we step on a hot piece of coal we jump in pain, and a minor headache makes us lose our senses, so then who has the power to endure a punishment which makes his brain boil? Ah! Show offs will be thrown into that valley of Hell which even Hell seeks protection from. اَلْأَمَانُ وَالْحَفِيفُ (We ask Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ for safety.)

Dear Islamic brothers! Are we still not going to stop showing off? Are we still not going to take up sincerity? How long will we stay heedless in this way? Ah! What will happen to us if Allah’s عَزَّوَجَلَّ mercy is not with us?

Kab gunāḥaun say kinārah mayn karūn gā Yā Rab

Nayk kab ay mayray Allah! Banū gā Yā Rab

Dard-e-sar ḥo yā bukhār, mayn taṛap jātā hūn

Mayn jahannam kī sazā kaysay saḥūn gā Yā Rab

When will I abandon sins O Lord

When will I be pious O Lord

Whether I have a fever or a headache I squirm in agony

How will I endure the torture of Hell O Lord

Showing Off

Dear Islamic brothers! Before death carries us out of our comfortable beds and transports us to a bed of soil in our graves we should save ourselves from the darkness of showing off by enlightening our hearts with the light of sincerity.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

How is it to label someone a show off?

Dear Islamic brothers! Your intention in acquiring knowledge about showing off should be self-reformation. Be careful not to let yourself fall into the trap of evil-suspicion (Bad-Gumānī) whilst attempting to save yourself from the trap of showing off. Therefore make sure that you never label any Muslim as a show off because showing off and sincerity depend on a man's intention. The Beloved and Blessed Prophet ﷺ said, 'Deeds depend on intentions.'

(*Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, vol. 1, pp. 1, Ḥadīṣ 1*)

Intentions are related to the heart, and we have no device or means to know for certain the contents of someone's heart unless he tells us himself. Therefore it is safer for our afterlife that we refrain from accusing anyone of showing off because this is evil-suspicion¹ and evil-suspicions are Ḥarām and lead to Hell.

Three legal [Shar'ī] rulings regarding intention

1. A'lā Ḥaḍrat, Imām-e-Aḥl-e-Sunnat, Maulānā Shāh Imām Aḥmad Razā Khān رَحْمَةُ الرَّحْمَنِ has written in *Fatāwā Razawīyyah*

¹ For detailed information about evil-suspicion please obtain the book 'Bad-Gumānī' published by Maktaba-tul-Madīnah.

volume 16, page 500: To unnecessarily suspect [without Shar'i reason] any Muslim of intending to show off is also Ḥarām.'

2. Someone asked A'lā Ḥaḍrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ that a man attempted to build a Maṣjid by donating money and he wants his name to be engraved into a stone, is this permissible or not according to Sharī'ah? He gave the following reply: 'The ruling about engraving one's name onto a stone varies depending on one's intention. If he does it for fame then he is showing off and this is cursed and Ḥarām but if his intention is that Muslims will pray for him for as long as his name remains there then there is nothing wrong with this, and we should assume the best regarding any Muslim as far as possible.' (*Fatāwā Razawīyyah*, vol. 23, pp. 389)
3. Someone asked that if an Imām usually gets the Maghrib Aẓān done late but in the presence of his Pīr (spiritual guide) he gets it done earlier to show him and whilst leading congregational Ṣalāh he performs Rukū' and Sujūd longer than usual then is this a sign of being a show off and a deceiver? A'lā Ḥaḍrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ gave the following response: 'An unnecessary delay without Shar'i reason in the Maghrib Aẓān is against the Sunnah, but having it done quickly in front of his Pīr does not necessarily mean that he was showing off, in fact it could be that he avoided the missing of that Sunnah due to fear or consideration of his Pīr. Prolonging Rukū' and Sujūd in presence of his Pīr is not either definite proof of showing off or deceit. It is possible that he experienced a spiritual effect due to his Pīr's presence. It is Wājib to assume the best regarding a Muslim's acts as much as possible and evil-suspicion is no less Ḥarām than showing off. However if he delays his Rukū' and Sujūd so much that it exceeds the Sunnah duration and causes difficulty

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to his followers then he definitely is a sinner. وَاللَّهُ تَعَالَى أَعْلَمُ. [Allah ﷺ knows the most].’ (*Fatāwā Razawīyyah*, vol. 5, pp. 324)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Remained deprived of crying for one year

Sayyidunā Makhḥūl Dimashqī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْقَرِيبِ said, ‘Whenever you see anyone crying then start crying with him, do not suspect he is showing off. I once saw a man crying and suspected that he was showing off. As a punishment I was deprived of crying (due to fear of Allah ﷻ and love of His Beloved Prophet ﷺ) for one year.’ (*Tanbīh-ul-Mughtarrīn*, pp. 107)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Do not be suspicious

Dear Islamic brothers! To suspect someone and pursue the existence of signs of showing off in him in order to discredit him is Ḥarām. (*Ihyā-ul-‘Ulūm*, chapter 3, vol. 2, pp. 150; *Kitāb-ul-Amr*, vol. 2, pp. 399 – summarized)

Anyhow, we should avoid searching for imperfections in other people and instead search for the aforementioned signs of showing off inside ourselves and then plan on curing this disease.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

O show off!

A woman called out to Sayyidunā Mālik Bin Dīnār عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْعَقَّارِ: ‘O show off!’ He عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ humbly replied, ‘O woman! The people of Basra forgot my name, you have remembered it.’

(Tazkira-tul-Awliyā, pp. 53)

سُبْحَنَ اللَّهِ! سُبْحَنَ اللَّهِ! Our pious predecessors were not only models of sincerity but also extremely tolerant and had excellent character. How much anyone bothered them they did not get angry for the sake of their Nafs. If they ever did then they never lost their patience. If we too are accused of ‘showing off’ by anyone then we should earn reward through patience instead of losing our temper.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

How does a person show off?

Dear Islamic brothers! In order to avoid showing off it is crucial to know how it is actually possible for a person to show off. Showing off is sometimes done by the tongue, and sometimes by actions. Here are some important details about this.

15 Examples of showing off with the tongue

1. Carefully saying religious things with the intention to impress people with his vast religious knowledge and eloquence, as though he claims, ‘*I have such a gift of speech that no one can explain their thoughts better than me*’. Such people desire a distinguished position through their speaking style. Public speakers, preachers and authors are easy prey for this type of showing off.

Showing Off

2. For an author to write statements such as the following in the introductions to their books: *'I wrote this big book consisting of 1000 pages in just 10 days'* in order to give the readers the impression that he is constantly busy with religious works.
3. For a preacher to begin a speech with statements indicating to the listener that he has made many sacrifices for religious activities and therefore the listeners should be grateful to him. For example, *'I have been travelling in a Madanī Qāfilah constantly for the past six days, it has taken me 13 hours to get here, I am very tired, I have not even eaten anything yet even then I have come to deliver a speech'* etc.
4. Mentioning his religious services constantly in conversations to make the listener think that he is an amazing servant of Islam and so that he admires him. For example, *'I have been preaching religion for the past 15 years. I had been conferred with such and such a post for such a long time. I carried out Madanī work in so many areas, in fact so many countries. I made hundreds of people repent of sins. I encouraged them to do Madanī work. I trained them'* etc. Members of any religious movement or organization can easily fall prey to this form of showing off.
5. Whilst answering a religious question verbally or in writing, saying or writing Arabic statements, or unnecessarily stating more than one book reference with the intention to convince the questioner or listener that he possess a lot of knowledge and so that he is considered to be a big scholar and a Muftī.
6. For a religiously famous or a respected figure to introduce himself to a new person with the intention to make him aware

and respect his high status or bring him some sort of worldly benefit.

7. For a Jāmi'ah or Madrasah teacher to unnecessarily mention his achievements in front of his students in order to make them admire him and make them think, '*What a great teacher we have.*'
8. Mentioning many of your personal traits to somebody and then saying, '*Do not tell anybody*' to impress him and make him think, '*This man is so sincere, he does not wish to reveal his good deeds.*'
9. Calling someone towards righteousness with the intention of convincing other people that he is a great well-wisher of Muslims, or reprimanding someone for evil to impress people into thinking, '*He is a man of great integrity. He cannot remain silent on seeing evil.*' Whereas he does not stop the evil which exists in his own house.
10. For a Ḥāfiẓ-e-Quran or Islamic scholar to unnecessarily reveal that he is a Ḥāfiẓ or scholar hoping that other people will admire him and make special seating arrangements for him.

Bahār-e-Sharī'at states: If a scholar lets people know that he is a scholar then there is no harm in this, but he must make sure that he does not do this out of pride because pride is prohibited (Ḥarām). In fact he should reveal his status of being a scholar in order to express Allah's favour upon him or so that once the public realises who he is they will benefit from him by asking him religious queries and be encouraged to pursue knowledge.

(Bahār-e-Sharī'at, part 16, pp. 270)

11. For a pilgrim to unnecessarily publicise that he is a Ḥājī to make people respect him.

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12. Proudly claiming to have met or accompanied or being related to famous scholars with the intention that people will respect him as well and admire him.
13. Saying humble or considerate words which do not coincide with one's true emotions, for example, '*I am nothing, I am a dog of your doorstep*' (whilst the situation is such that if someone else dares to call him these words he would get angry).
14. Unnecessarily expressing virtues with the intention of increasing his respect and admiration in the hearts of other people.
15. Talking in an argumentative way with the intention of impressing people with his knowledge and intellect.

Beware! Beware! Beware! Never think evil of any Muslim (especially the aforementioned). A'lā Ḥaḍrat Imām Aḥmad Razā Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ الرَّحْمٰن said: Hundreds of thousands of Islamic rulings and judgments vary depending on intentions. (*Fatāwā Razawīyyah*, vol. 8, pp. 98)

Evil-assumptions (Bad-Gumānī) are Ḥarām and good assumptions about pious Muslims are Mustahab. Each and every one of us should search for these various verbal forms of showing off in ourselves.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

15 Examples of showing off in actions

1. Crying whilst talking or listening to someone else, or whilst delivering or listening to a speech, or while reciting or listening to a Na'at with the intention that on-lookers consider him to be someone who fears Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and someone who has deep love for the Beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

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2. Constantly moving the lips in the presence of other people or in a congregation so that people consider him to be some who does *Ẓikr* (remembrance) of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ in abundance or one who abundantly recites *Ṣalāt*-‘Alan-Nabī.
3. Delivering a speech by heart just to give people the impression that he is a great scholar, or hesitating to read from a book during his speech fearing that the audience will perceive him to be ignorant.
4. Acting like a forgiving and humble person outside his home but arrogant inside.
5. Displaying a good character in front of other people whilst his family are fed up of his ill-character at home.
6. To offer *Ṣalāh* in front of other people with fear and humility practicing all its etiquettes but to offer *Ṣalāh* when alone in such a manner that even the fulfilment of its *Farāid* and *Wājibāt* are doubtful.
7. Practicing *Sunnahs* of eating, drinking, sitting etc. properly in public but being lazy to practice them in solitude.
8. Rushing to show generosity when people are watching but refusing to give charity when asked in private.
9. Eating less when attending an invitation to give other people the impression that he follows the *Sunnah* and eats a little, but when he is at home or amongst informal friends he ends up even eating the share of other people.

In order to explain this to us Shaykh-e-Ṭarīqat Amīr-e-Ahl-e-Sunnat دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمُ الْعَالِيَهُ wrote the following in *Faizān-e-Sunnat*

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volume 1, page 477: ‘Even if you spend your whole life filling your stomach with food, you are not a sinner but if you show off even once in your life then you are a sinner and deserving of hellfire. If someone eats less and eats carefully in front of Islamic brothers to give them the impression that he applies ‘Qufl-e-Madīnah’ to his stomach but then on the way home he stuffs himself until he is full and pounces on food like a hungry lion, then such a person is a definite show off and deserves hellfire. Certainly, the truly intelligent Islamic brother is the one who eats in the presence of other people without letting them realise that he only eats a small portion of food and also applies ‘Qufl-e-Madīnah’ to his stomach properly at home as well. Our deeds must be only and solely for Allah’s pleasure because sincerity is the key to acceptance.’

Riyā Kāriyaun say bachā Yā Ilāhī

Ker ikhlāṣ mujh ko ‘aṭā Yā Ilāhī

Save me from showing off O my Lord

Grant me sincerity O my Lord

Method of eating less amongst other people

(Amīr-e-Ahl-e-Sunnat داعية برکاتہ العالیہ further stated): One possible way to avoid showing off amongst other people or to avoid the persistence of a host etc. is to eat using three fingers with small morsels whilst chewing your food properly and to always abide by the Sunnahs of eating. Especially in feasts most people eat very quickly therefore their indulging in food will probably distract their attention from you. In spite of these things if you still find yourself finishing your meal quickly then pass time by slowly cleaning the bones. Hopefully this way you will succeed in finishing your meal at

the same time as everyone else. If he finishes his meal so quickly when amongst the people for the sake of showing off thinking to make an impression that people will consider him a pious man and that he eats a little because of observing piety. Doing so is Ḥarām and an act leading to Hell. It is very necessary for one to save himself from showing-off.

The Prophet of Raḥmaḥ, the Intercessor of Ummaḥ, the Owner of Jannaḥ ﷺ has said, ‘Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ does not like a deed which has even little show-off in it.’

(Attarghīb Wattarḥīb, vol. 1, pp. 87; Faizān-e-Sunnat, vol. 1, pp. 476)

10. For someone who has a voluntary fast to roll his tongue over his lips or act in a way that reveals he is fasting.
11. If someone is given a chance to recite a Na’at in front of a large audience on a microphone with the echo on then he recites enthusiastically but if there is no echo or only a few people or he is alone then his throat gets tired in just a short while.

Shaykh-e-Ṭarīqat, Amīr-e-Aḥl-e-Sunnat رَايِسُ تَرَاثُفِ السُّنَّةِ explained to us on page 39 of his booklet *The Four Donkeys of Satan*: ‘In a Qirā’at or Na’at competition if the second position holder is jealous of the first position holder or the third position holder is jealous of the second and first position holders, or he thinks that his recitation of the Quran or Na’at was very good and he deserved a better position but still got a third position and so he says to people, ‘*The judges were unfair*’ then he got trapped in the calamity of slandering, backbiting, evil-assumptions etc.

There is also a risk of showing off because he did not recite the blessed Na’at for the sake of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and His Beloved

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Prophet ﷺ but rather for the medal, trophy, prize, or money or so that his photo or name appears in a newspaper and he becomes famous. He wants people to praise his voice, congratulate him and give him gifts etc. In this case he cannot expect to receive any reward, in fact he deserves Hell due to his sin of showing off. Such ‘competitions’ are permissible in Shari’ah but the participants should think carefully about the level of sincerity in their hearts.’

Can I read two couplets for blessings?

When there is a large congregation somewhere with the echo sound speakers then seeing a large crowd makes almost everyone to ‘say a few words to the crowd’ or recite the Holy Quran or a Na’at. If the Na’ats were recorded then they would be specifically searched for his own voice. If his voice is not there in the recording then he may feel disappointed. What does this disappointment mean? What if a talented Qārī or Na’at-reciter wants CDs of his performances to be sold in shops? Is there any hope of sincerity in this desire? Was the recitation of Quran and Na’at for Allah’s sake or for the CDs? If there is a large Ṣikr and Na’at congregation and the echo is on, some people will say, ‘*Can you let me recite two couplets for blessings?*’

Please glance into your hearts and check if it is blessings that you want or fame! If you really desire blessings then my Madanī suggestion is that you sit in your room at home with your door closed, visualise the blessed Green Dome and then recite a Na’at. *إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ* you will be safe from showing off, thus piling up blessings for yourself and your book of deeds will shine with the light of good deeds. *الْعَاقِلُ تَكْفِيهِ الْإِشَارَةُ* meaning ‘*a hint is sufficient for the wise.*’ May Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ grant us sincerity.

Showing Off

Dil mayn hō yād tayrī gaushāh-e-tanhāī hō

Phir to khalwat mayn 'ajab anjuman ārāī hō

*With your remembrance in my heart in a corner of solitude
Then even in isolation there shall be an amazing gathering*

(Żauq-e-Na'at)

(Derived from: The Four Donkeys of Satan, pp. 39)

12. Whilst delivering a speech if there is a large audience the preacher displays great oratory skills, but if for some reason there are not many spectators then he delivers a dull sermon or does not feel like talking at all.
13. If by good fortune someone is blessed with spending the night in worship or offering Ṣalāt-ut-Taḥajjud then for him to rub his eyes in front of other people during the day or to stretch his arms etc. to let people know that he spent the night in worship.
14. In the presence of other people he lowers his gaze if he sees a woman coming but if no one is watching him he stares at her for a long time.
15. In the presence of others if he hears music he inserts his fingers into his ears to make people think that he is a practising Muslim, but he has installed musical doorbell at home or has a musical tune on his mobile phone.

If we continue to ponder in this manner we will realise how many forms of showing off are there in clothing, speech, body language. There is a good chance that I may have touched someone's nerve, instead of getting displeased with me such Islamic brothers should repent and attempt to cure themselves.

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Dear Islamic brothers! Remember that we must not assume that any Muslim is showing off because evil-assumptions are Harām and having good opinions about Muslims is Mustahab. In fact, such people should search for these signs of showing off in themselves and then plan on curing themselves.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

In what things does a person show off?

Dear Islamic brothers! It is possible to show off in three ways: (1) Faith. (2) Worldly matters. (3) Worships. Here is their necessary detail:

1. Showing off in faith

To act as a Muslim outwardly but to reject Islam inwardly. This showing off is also called hypocrisy, meaning verbally professing to be a Muslim but denying it in his heart, this is also clear Kufr (unbelief). Such a person is a hypocrite and his claim of believing in Islam is a false. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ said in part 27 the first verse of Sūrah Al-Munāfiqūn:

إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُنَافِقُونَ قَالُوا نَشْهَدُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُهُ
وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ كَذِبُونَ ﴿١﴾

When the hypocrites come in your presence (O dear Prophet Muhammad) they say, 'We testify that you surely are Allah's Noble Messenger'; and Allah knows that you indeed are His Noble Messenger, and Allah testifies that the hypocrites are indeed liars.

[Kanz-ul-Īmān (Translation of Quran)] (Part 28, Sūrah Al-Munāfiqūn, verse 1)

These people will be in the lowest portion of Hell. Allah ﷻ said in the Holy Quran:

إِنَّ الْمُنْفِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ

Undoubtedly the hypocrites are in the lowest sector of Hell.

[Kanz-ul-Īmān (Translation of Quran)] (Part 5, Sūrah An-Nisā, verse 145)

During the apparent life of the Beloved Prophet ﷺ there were some hypocrites whose inner hypocrisy was exposed in the Holy Quran. With his vast knowledge which had been granted to him by Allah ﷻ the Ghayb-knowing Rasūl, the Embodiment of Nūr ﷺ recognised each and every one of them and exposed them name by name saying ‘he is a hypocrite’.

(Al-Mu’jam-ul-Awsaṭ, vol. 1, pp. 231, Ḥadīṣ 792)

These days it is impossible to declare any specific person as a hypocrite therefore if somebody in front of us claims to be a Muslim then we must believe him to be a Muslim,¹ unless he is guilty of saying or doing something that negates his faith. However, there is a form of hypocrisy that still exists today, which is that many deviants claim to be Muslims, but when observed carefully you can see that in spite of claiming to be Muslims they actually reject many fundamental beliefs of Islam. *(Bahār-e-Sharī’at, part 1, pp. 96 – summarized)*

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

¹ Al-Yawāqit, vol. 2, pp. 373

2. Showing off in worldly matters

Sometimes we use the term showing off to refer to someone who does worldly actions with the desire of creating respect and fame for himself in people's hearts. For example, he wears clean, perfumed, fancy clothes to attract attention from other people but at home he does not dress that way. The same applies to any form of glamour or beautification or means of acquiring respect from people.

Shar'i ruling: Such showing off is not Ḥarām because distortion in religious issues and trying to mock at Allah ﷻ is not found in these things. (*Az-Zawājir 'An-Iqtirāf-il-Kabāir*, vol. 1, pp. 78)

Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad Ghazālī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْوَالِي said: Wanting respect in people's hearts with acts other than acts of worship is like seeking money; hence it is not Ḥarām.

(*Ihyā-ul-'Ulūm*, chapter 2, vol. 3, pp. 368)

It is stated in *Ḥadiqah Nadiyyah*: Any worldly act which is done not to hide the truth and is free from lying and does not lead to any disallowed, Ḥarām or Makrūh act then showing off with that act is not Ḥarām. However such showing off is still disliked because it can lead to showing off in religious matters. (*Al-Ḥadiqa-tun-Nadiyyah*, vol. 1, pp. 478) وَاللَّهُ تَعَالَى أَعْلَمُ [And Allah ﷻ knows best.]

Anyhow, even in permissible acts you can earn rewards by making virtuous intentions. For example, when applying perfume if you intend to follow a Sunnah, respect the Masjid, relax your mind, and remove unpleasant odours from your Islamic brothers then you will gain separate reward for each individual intention.

(*Ashi'a-tul-Lam'āt*, vol. 1, pp. 37)

Our Beloved Prophet ﷺ combed his blessed hair

When the Prophet of mankind, the Peace of our heart and mind, the most Generous and Kind ﷺ intended to exit his blessed home, he ﷺ straightened his blessed turban and hair and looked at his blessed face in mirror, Sayyidatunā ‘Āishah Ṣiddiqah رضى الله تعالى عنها enquired, ‘O the Greatest and Holiest Prophet ﷺ! Are you doing this too?’ He ﷺ replied, ‘Yes, Allah عزَّ وجلَّ likes to see His bondman adorn himself when he is about to appear before his brothers.’

(Ithāf-us-Sādāt-il-Muttaqīn, vol. 10, pp. 93, 94)

Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad Ghazālī عليه رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْوَالِي wrote in regard to aforementioned Ḥadīṣ: This was an emphasised worship for the Beloved Prophet ﷺ because he ﷺ was ordered to preach to mankind and make their hearts lean towards the truth as much as possible. If he ﷺ was not respected in the eyes of people then they would have turned away from him, therefore it was obligatory for him to appear in public in the best appearance so that people would not ignore him and turn away considering him untrustworthy, because common humans only see physical appearances and not hidden qualities. Therefore, this act of the Revered and Renowned Prophet ﷺ was also a virtuous act. The same ruling applies to honourable scholars رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى and similarly religious personalities providing their intention as mentioned above in adorning themselves. *(Ihyā-ul-‘Ulūm, chapter 2, vol. 3, pp. 368)*

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ ﷺ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

3. Showing off in worship

It is possible to show off in worship in two ways: (i) Showing off in its fulfilment. (ii) Showing off in its attributes.

i). Showing off in its fulfilment

This is for a person to worship when other people are watching him but if no one sees him then he does not worship. For example if he offers Ṣalāh when other people are watching but not when he is alone, or if he fasts when other people are watching but not when alone, or if he attends Ṣalāt-ul-Jumu'ah, or treats his relatives well due to fear of people, then this person is a show off.

Shar'i ruling: This man will not receive any reward for his worship, in fact he is a major sinner and worthy of hellfire. 'Allāmah 'Abdul Ghanī Nābulusī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ الْهَادِي wrote in *Hadiqah Nadiyyah*: If someone offered Ṣalāh in order to show other people then there is no reward for him, instead he is a sinner because he has sinned and not worshipped. (*Al-Hadiqa-tun-Nadiyyah*, vol. 1, pp. 478 – summarized)

However his Farḍ of Ṣalāh will be fulfilled. Someone asked A'lā Ḥaḍrat, Imām-e-Ahl-e-Sunnat, reviver of Sunnah, scholar of Shari'ah, Ash-Shāh Imām Aḥmad Razā Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ الرَّحْمٰن whether or not a man who offers Ṣalāh or fasts to show off has fulfilled his obligatory duty. He عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ تَعَالٰى replied, 'Fiqhī Ṣalāh and fast will be fulfilled because there was no invalidator (means, act which invalidates Ṣalāh or fast), but he will not receive any reward, in fact he is worthy of hellfire. On the Day of Judgement he will be told: O sinner! O traitor! O loser! O infidel! Your deed is wasted! Seek your reward from whoever you used to act for.' (*Multaqaṭan, Shu'ab-ul-Īmān*, vol. 5, pp. 333, *Hadīṣ 6831*) This very evil is enough for the condemnation of showing-off. (*Malḡūẓāt-e-A'lā Ḥaḍrat, Part 1, pp. 177*)

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Şadr-ush-Sharī'ah, Badr-ut-Ṭarīqah, 'Allāmah Maulānā Muftī Muhammad Amjad 'Alī A'zamī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْقَوِي says in *Bahār-e-Sharī'at* part 16 page 238 published by Maktaba-tul-Madīnāh, 'In any type of worship, sincerity is absolutely compulsory, meaning the deed must be done solely to please Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. Deeds done for showing off are Ḥarām by consensus.' He رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ further wrote on page 239, 'One offers Ṣalāh if people are watching but not when he is alone, this is complete showing off, and there is no reward at all for such worship.'

Ḥakīm-ul-Ummat Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْعَتَّان said, 'Worship which was done to show off is like a seed that has been eaten by an insect from the inside and does not produce anything.'

(Mirāt-ul-Manājīh, vol. 7, pp. 143)

Dear Islamic brothers! If someone fears showing off in fulfilling Farḍ then they should do not miss that worship due to this fear, rather they should complete the act of worship and attempt to avoid showing off and try to be sincere.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

ii). Showing off in attributes

This is when a person worships in a much better way in order to show his worship to people. For example, in the presence of other people he offers Ṣalāh very well i.e. with humility and concentration but when no one is watching he offers very quickly. Sayyidunā 'Abdullāh Bin Mas'ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ said, 'Whoever does this, insults his Lord عَزَّوَجَلَّ.' Meaning he does not care that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is watching him when even alone and he offers properly when other people are watching.

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Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad Ghazālī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْوَالِي explained this point to us using the following example: If you sit in front of another person whilst reclining (in an object) or with your legs crossed and then the man's servant appears and you suddenly straighten yourself and sit properly, then you are giving the servant preference over his master and this is most certainly an insult to the master. A show off is like this, in that he too offers Ṣalāh beautifully in the presence of other people but not in solitude, as if he gives preference to people over their Creator عَزَّوَجَلَّ. (*Iḥyā-ul-‘Ulūm, part 2, vol. 3, pp. 372*)

Someone asked A'lā Ḥaḍrat, Imām-e-Aḥl-e-Sunnat, reviver of Sunnah, scholar of Sharī'ah, Ash-Shāh Imām Aḥmad Razā Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَن, 'If a person offers Ṣalāh with humility when he is alone in order to practice offering with humility in front of others then is he showing off or not?' He عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى answered, 'This is also showing off because his heart contains the intention (to please someone) other than Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.' (*Malfūzāt, part 2, pp. 166*)

Shar'ī ruling: This type of showing off is less severe than the first, this person will receive reward for his actual Ṣalāh but not for the beauty of his Ṣalāh, although even in this case he has committed a show off.

It is stated in *Bahār-e-Sharī'at* part 16 page 239: The second type (of showing off) is for a man to not show off in his actual worship, meaning he would offer Ṣalāh regardless of whether or not anyone sees him, but he shows off in the attribute of Ṣalāh, meaning even if nobody sees him he would still offer but not as beautifully. This second type is less severe than the first, he will receive reward for the essence of his Ṣalāh but not for offering it in an excellent way because the adornment was done with an intention of showing off and not out of sincerity.

Pure showing off and mixed showing off

Dear Islamic brothers! Showing off in worship is sometimes pure and sometimes mixed:

1. If the intention behind worshipping is only and solely to please another human or attain any worldly incentive then this is pure showing off. The Shar'i ruling about this is that the one showing off in actual worship will not only be deprived of the rewards but also be punished for showing off. On the other hand if the showing off exists in the attribute of the worship then he will not be rewarded for the adornment of that worship and since he is still a show off, he is still under the burden of showing off and
2. if the intention behind worshipping is worldly incentive along with the reward in the afterlife then this is mixed showing off. There are a few cases for this:
 - a. If the intention of worldly profit exceeds the intention of reward then there is no reward for him.
 - b. If the intention of worldly profit is the same amount as the intention for reward then there is no reward for him in this case also.
 - c. If the intention for reward exceeds the intention of showing off then he will be rewarded according to his intention.

Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad Ghazālī عليه رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ الْوَالِي said: If the dominant intention is any worldly incentive then he will gain no reward at all. If the dominant intention is the afterlife then he will be rewarded. If both intentions are equal then there is no reward. He رحمته اللہ تعالیٰ علیہ also said: If someone's worship being

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revealed increases his activeness and energy, but even if his worship had not been revealed to people, he would not have missed that worship, then even if he intended to show off we hope that his original reward will not go to waste, but he will be punished according to the amount that he showed off and rewarded according to his virtuous intention.'

(Az-Zawājir 'An-Iqtirāf-il-Kabāir, vol. 1, pp. 78)

It is stated in *Bahār-e-Sharī'at* part 16 page 240: If someone went for Hajj and took business merchandise with him, then if his intention of business is stronger than the other, meaning his purpose is to do business but then thinks 'When I get there I will perform Hajj as well', or if both intentions are equal meaning he travelled for both purposes then in both these cases he will not gain any reward for his journey. On the other hand if his intention is to perform Hajj but he thinks 'If I get a chance I will sell some merchandise as well', then he will be rewarded for his Hajj. Similarly if he goes to offer Jumu'aḥ and also intends to do other jobs whilst in the market but his original intention is to offer Jumu'aḥ then he will be rewarded but if his intention of doing other jobs is stronger than his intention of offering Jumu'aḥ, or both intentions are equal, then he will gain no reward.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

How is it to take a wage for religious services?

A'lā Ḥaḍrat, Imām-e-Aḥl-e-Sunnat, Maulānā Shāḥ Imām Aḥmad Razā Khān رَحْمَةُ الرَّحْمَنِ has said in *Fatāwā Razawiyyah* (edited) volume 19 page 494: It is permissible to take a wage for teaching the

Holy Quran, other religious sciences, Azān, and Imāmat. This Fatwā was issued by later scholars whilst taking into consideration the protection of Islamic values and faith of Muslims in the current state. However according to the original principle it is still prohibited to take a wage for other virtuous deeds such as visiting graves, reciting the Holy Quran for departed souls, reciting the Holy Quran, or celebrating the birthday of the Beloved Prophet ﷺ. وَاللَّهُ تَعَالَى أَعْلَمُ [Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ knows best.]

Will the wage recipient get any Šawāb (reward)?

Someone asked A'lā Ḥaḍrat Imām Aḥmad Razā Khān رَحْمَةُ الرَّحْمَنِ the following questions: Whether or not it is permissible for an Imām-e-Masjid to take wages for leading the five daily Ṣalāḥs and the Jumu'ah Ṣalāḥ? And whether or not it is permissible to take a wage for teaching the Holy Quran, Fiqh and Aḥādīṣ?

He رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ gave the following replies: [Answer] It is permissible but they will not be rewarded for leading the Ṣalāḥ because they have sold the Imāmat. [Answer]: It is permissible but they will receive no reward in the afterlife. وَاللَّهُ تَعَالَى أَعْلَمُ [Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ knows best.]

(Fatāwā Razawiyyah, vol. 19, pp. 521)

Therefore if you are not desperate then you should do these religious tasks without any pay and accumulate an abundance of reward in the afterlife. The reward for a selfless deed is something special. However there is a severe test in carrying out these tasks without a wage, that is whoever does Imāmat or religious teaching etc. for free gains a lot of publicity and public admiration. I wonder how such a person would be able to save himself from showing off. If only there was such enthusiasm that an Imām would take a wage and then

Showing Off

secretly donate it without letting any close Islamic brother or even any family member know, otherwise avoiding showing off will be extremely difficult. The real beauty is when only the bondman and his Creator عَزَّوَجَلَّ know.

Mayrā her ‘amal bas Tayray wāsiṭay ho

Ker ikhlāṣ aysā ‘aṭā Yā Ilāhī

May my every deed be only for You

Grant me such sincerity O my Lord

One case in which a wage taker can get reward

If someone has to bear family expenses and he takes a wage for the aforementioned services with the intention that if he did not have a family to support then he would certainly refrain from taking wages for his religious services then we can hope that by Allah’s mercy he will gain double reward, as explained by ‘Allāmah Ibn Ābidīn Shāmī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْقَوِي in *Rad-dul-Muhtār* whilst talking about whether or not an employed Muazzin receives any reward from Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ for giving the Azān (call to Ṣalāh): ‘However we can say that if he (the Muazzin) intends to please Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ but due to a commitment of time and due to being occupied in this religious service he cannot earn a livelihood for his family so he takes a wage in order that he does not lose out on this great privilege (of giving the Azān) due to being occupied in a worldly profession, and if he did not have a family to support then he would not take this wage, then this person also deserves the same reward from Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ that has been promised in religious texts for anyone who calls the Azān. In fact he will have combined two worships, firstly calling the Azān and secondly striving to support his family, and actions’ rewards are dependent on intentions. (*Rad-dul-Muhtār*, vol. 2, pp. 74)

Easy method for obtaining reward

It is better for him to take a wage based on time rather than his religious duty. The benefit of this would be that if he then carries out the religious service with the intention of gaining reward then (إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ) he will gain the reward as well as his wage.

When A'lā Ḥaḍrat, Imām-e-Aḥl-e-Sunnat Maulānā Shāh Imām Aḥmad Razā Khān عَلِيٌّ رَحْمَةُ الرَّحْمَنِ was asked a question about taking money in exchange for reciting the Holy Quran and Ḍikr of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ for the purpose of conveying its reward to the soul of a deceased, he replied with the following: It is Ḥarām to take or give a wage for reciting the Holy Quran or for the Ḍikr of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. Both the givers and receivers are sinners and as they themselves are committing a Ḥarām act, what reward will they convey to a deceased person? Expecting reward for a sin is actually a more serious sin. If people want to convey reward to any deceased in a permissible manner then the method for that is to hire the reciters for an hour or two and fix the wages of every person for that time period. For example, the organiser should say, 'I have hired you from such a time to such a time for this amount of money and I will make you do any job that I want'. The person who is being offered should say, 'I accept.' Now he has become an employee for that specific time, and the employer can make him do any job he wants. Then the employer can say, 'Recite this amount of Holy Quran, Kalimah Ṭayyibah or Ṣalāt-'Alan-Nabī for so and so deceased person. This is permissible (because he is being paid for the benefits he is providing and not for his virtuous deeds or worship). (*Fatāwā Razawīyyah*, vol. 10, pp. 193, 194)

In light of this blessed Fatwā it is permissible for Imāms, Muazzins and religious teachers to receive a wage for their religious services. Masjid or Madrasah administration should fix a wage and time such

as five hours and make a job offer to a Qārī by saying, ‘You must do whatever we tell you’ and mention his wage as well. If the Qārī accepts then he will become their employee. Now they can assign his duty to teach the Holy Quran to children every day within those five hours.

Remember! Whether it is Imāmat, Khiṭābat, calling Azān or any other occupation where it is definite that wages and salary are involved, then it is Wājib to ascertain a specific amount of money prior to the job, otherwise the receiver and giver will both be sinners.



Do not use religion for worldly livelihood

Imāmat, Khiṭābat, calling Azān, and teaching are certainly great acts of worship and taking a wage for them is also permissible but you should not use them for worldly profit because there are very severe warnings for such individuals in the blessed Aḥādīṣ. The Noblest Prophet ﷺ said: In the end of times there will be people who will earn worldly wealth through their religion. They will be a wolf in sheep’s clothing, and their tongues will be sweeter than sugar but their hearts will be like wolves. Allah عزوجل said, ‘Do they (attempt to) deceive Me or dare against Me, I swear by Myself that I will send upon them such tribulation from themselves that will surprise even a tolerant person.’

(Jāmi’-ut-Tirmizī, Kitāb-uz-Zuḥd, vol. 4, pp. 181, Ḥadīṣ 2412)

Ḥakīm-ul-Ummat Maulānā Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān Na’īmī عليه رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ الْقَوِي explained this Ḥadīṣ: This can have two meanings; either they will use religion to deceive the world, or they will use religion to earn worldly profit. People who earn worldly profit by

using the name of Islam and the Holy Quran and mislead people by wearing cloaks and turbans, are the worst of people.

(*Mirāt-ul-Manājīh*, vol. 7, pp. 133)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

The consequence of the one who pursued worldly profit through religion

Sayyidunā Mūsā Kalīmullāh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام had a servant, who became very rich and was no longer seen for a long time. Sayyidunā Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام enquired about him but he was not found. Then one day he saw a man with a pig that had a black rope around its neck. Sayyidunā Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام asked the man, 'Do you know so and so?' He replied, 'Yes! This pig is that man.' Sayyidunā Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام prayed, 'O Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ I ask You to return this man to his former state so that I can ask him what happened.' Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ sent a revelation to him, 'Even if you supplicate to me as much as Ādam (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) or even more, then I will not accept your supplication regarding this man but I tell you that the reason for his condition is that he pursued the world using religion.'

(*Ihyā-ul-'Ulūm, Kitāb-ul-'Ilm*, vol. 1, pp. 90)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Correct your intention before any worship

Dear Islamic brothers! Before beginning any good deed take a long hard look at your heart and ask yourself, 'Am I doing this for the pleasure of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ or for other people', and then correct your

intention and make sure that you do that good deed only and solely intending to please Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Waiting for the intention to be correct

Remember! Deeds are of two types:

1. Deeds that only relate to ourselves i.e. fasting, Ṣalāḥ, Hajj etc. If your intention behind these worships is only to show other people then this is totally a sin, therefore do not do these deeds until your intention is correct. However if waiting for the intention to be correct, causes you to miss something that is Farḍ or Wājib, for example you fear that you will miss Ṣalāḥ with Jamā'at or the actual Ṣalāḥ itself then you are not allowed to delay this worship.
2. Deeds that relate to other humans, e.g. caliphate, judicial duties, preaching, teaching, Fatāwā etc. One day someone asked Sayyidunā 'Umar Fārūq-e-A'ẓam رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ for permission to advise people after Ṣalāt-ul-Fajr but he رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ refused. The man asked, 'Are you stopping me from preaching to people?' He رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ replied, 'I fear that you might become big headed and reach the sky.' (*Iḥyā-ul-'Ulūm, vol. 3, pp. 400*)

Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad Ghazālī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ الْوَالِي while trying to make us understand explained: Therefore a man should not be misled by the excellence of preaching and knowledge, because these acts contain the most dangers. We are not suggesting that anyone should stop doing these deeds, because they themselves are not bad, rather the evil lies in showing off whilst preaching, teaching, issuing Fatāwā and narrating Aḥādīṣ. Therefore any deed should not be terminated for as long as there is a religious advantage in it, even if

it is not truly sincere. Rather, what you should do is continue to carry out these deeds and at the same time fight Nafs, work hard to be sincere and avoid the dangers of showing off, and even any traces of it. (*Ihyā-ul-‘Ulūm*, vol. 3, pp. 399 to 401 – summarized)

A satanic whisper and its solution

One Islamic brother was travelling in a Madanī Qāfilāh of Dawat-e-Islami with the devotees of Rasūl. When at night, according to the timetable, these travellers in the path of Allah awoke in order to offer Taḥajjud, this Islamic brother also made the effort to offer Taḥajjud even though he did not usually offer this Ṣalāh. He suspected that maybe he was showing off, but this is not the case because there are a few possibilities here:

1. If this Islamic brother offers Taḥajjud or does any other good deed in imitation of other brothers thinking that they are sincere with the religion of Allah ﷻ and that they have had the privilege to offer Taḥajjud or they have sacrificed their sleep for Ṣadā-e-Madīnah (waking up Muslims for Ṣalāt-ul-Fajr) and therefore I also wish to have a share in the blessings of their company and offer Taḥajjud for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ, then this is not showing off, because if this same Islamic brother was in his home then he would not be able to worship in the night due to sleep or he would be lazy in worshipping at night or he would be occupied in other household chores. In this case he should ignore these satanic whispers because this is a situation where a person usually falls prey to such satanic whispers. The devil says to him, ‘If you do not do a deed at home but you do it in front of other people then you are a show off,’ and in this way he deprives a person from good deeds.

2. And if this Islamic brother offers Taḥajjud with other brothers so that people praise him. No one calls him lazy or negligent if he does not offer Taḥajjud, then he is showing off. Moreover, for the reason that his desire of public praise and recognition, or his fear of being condemned for not worshipping or fear of losing respect if he does not worship, are all disobedience to Allah ﷻ. (Such an Islamic brother should struggle to rectify his intention rather than stop his good deeds)

(Iḥyā-ul-‘Ulūm, vol. 3, pp. 404 – summarized)

Copying good people is also good

The Prophet of Raḥmah, the Intercessor of Ummah, the Owner of Jannah ﷺ said: Whoever imitates any nation will be one of them. (*Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Kitāb-ul-Libās, vol. 6, pp. 26, Ḥadīṣ 4031*)

Ḥakīm-ul-Ummat Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān رَحْمَةُ الْمَلَائِكَةِ explained this Ḥadīṣ: Meaning whoever imitates infidels, sinners and indecent people in this world in clothing, or appearance then he will rise on the Day of Judgement with them, and whoever imitates pious Muslims in clothing or appearance will رِثَ شَاءَ اللَّهِ ﷻ rise with those who fear Allah ﷻ. Remember that impersonating someone’s appearance is called ‘Tashabbuḥ’ and impersonating someone’s character is called ‘Takhalluq’, this Ḥadīṣ contains the word ‘Tashabbuḥ’.

Parable

The day Fir’awn and all his followers drowned there was an impostor who survived. Sayyidunā Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام asked Allah ﷻ: ‘O Lord (ﷻ) why did he survive?’ He ﷻ replied, ‘He was impersonating you, and I do not punish anyone who imitates any of My friends.’ (*Mirqāt*)

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Even in Ṣalāḥ, fasting and other worships a Muslim should intend to emulate pious people especially the most pious of all people, the Beloved and Blessed Prophet ﷺ. Whether or not your heart is present in worship at least you are succeeding in emulating The Greatest and Holiest Prophet ﷺ. *إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ*. *صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ*. due to the blessings of this, Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will forgive us imitators, as well.

(*Mirāt-ul-Manājīḥ*, vol. 6, pp. 109)

However, you should not desire that people praise you otherwise this would be showing off and showing off is Ḥarām.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Showing off during worship

Dear Islamic brothers! Showing off is not something that only exists in the beginning of any worship, in fact it can exist in the middle or even after it. If someone started worship with sincerity but felt the desire to show off during the worship then if he instantly shakes off this satanic thought, he is sincere and will be rewarded.

It is stated in *Al-Ḥadīqa-tun-Nadiyyaḥ* volume 1: The mere thought or inclination of showing off is not harmful because Satan accompanies all humans and it is not possible for a human to prevent Satan from attempting to mislead him and for him to avoid being inclined towards his temptations. This is the reason why Satan continues to tempt humans, but we should not let these thoughts settle in our hearts and we should confront satanic thoughts with religious knowledge, resentment and rejection.

(*Al-Ḥadīqa-tun-Nadiyyaḥ*, vol. 1, pp. 496)

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On the other hand if he lets this satanic thought settle in his heart until the end of that worship then there are two possibilities:

1. He completes the rest of the worship to show off.
2. He would have completed that worship even the thought of showing off had not come about.

In the first case (i.e. he completes the rest of the worship to show-off), if the worship is Ṣalāh, fasting, or Hajj then he will not be rewarded for this worship. For example if someone begins Ṣalāh and then suddenly remembers about some money that he had forgotten and he instantly wants to search for it, and if people were not watching him then he would have terminated his Ṣalāh to search for the money, but he continues his Ṣalāh out of fear of being criticized by them, then his reward is wasted. The Noblest Prophet ﷺ said, 'A deed is like a container, if its end is good then its beginning will also be good.' (*Sunan Ibn Mājah, Kitāb-uz-Zuhd, vol. 4, pp. 468, Ḥadīṣ 4199*)

If that deed is something other than Ṣalāh, fasting or Hajj such as charity or recitation of the Holy Quran then only the part of the worship that includes showing off is wasted but not the preceding part because every part of the worship has a separate ruling.

(*Iḥyā-ul-'Ulūm, chapter 2, vol. 3, pp. 377, 378*)

In the second case (in which he would have completed the worship even if the thought of showing off had not come about) the amount of showing off which entered the worship is the amount of reward that he will lose, and he will not lose the entire reward. For example if someone offers Ṣalāh and then some people appear (and even if they did not appear he would still complete his worship) but their presence made him happy and he starts to show off (by performing

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his Rukū' and Sujūd better than before), then in this case he will be rewarded for his Ṣalāh but not for the beauty (due to showing-off) of his Ṣalāh.

Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad Ghazālī عليه رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ الْوَالِي said: If the someone's worship being revealed increases his activeness and energy, but even if his worship had not been revealed to people, he would not have missed that worship, then even if he intended to show off we hope that his original reward will not go to waste, but he will be punished according to the amount that he showed off and rewarded according to his virtuous intention.

(Az-Zawājir 'An-Iqtirāf-il-Kabāir, vol. 1, pp. 78)

Bahār-e-Sharī'at part 16 page 239 states: If someone started an act of worship with sincerity but then he began to show off during the worship then it would not be said that he worshipped to show off, in fact worship was performed with sincerity, but the beauty that occurred in the worship afterwards was due to show off.

Revealing your good deeds

Dear Islamic brothers! If someone completes his worship with sincerity, without it containing any showing off from beginning to end, but after he finishes it he tells people about it then there are two possibilities here:

1. He tells people about his worship because he is a leader and the revealing of his deed will inspire them. In this case, it is permissible and commendable for him to expose his worship. Examples of such people are Faqīh, Muḥaddīṣ, Murshid (spiritual guide), preacher, teacher or any other influential personality whom people follow.

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Sayyidunā Ibn ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُمَا narrated that the Beloved and Blessed Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, ‘Secret worship is better than public worship and a leader’s public worship is better than his secret (worship).’ (*Shu‘ab-ul-Īmān* 46, vol. 5, pp. 376, *Hadīṣ* 7012)

Ḥakīm-ul-Ummat Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ الْخَاتَمَان wrote: ‘Revealing one’s worship to people for educational purpose is not showing off in fact it is religious propagation and education and he will be rewarded for it. Scholars said: The showing-off of Ṣiddiqīn (Ṣiddiq is a title of a very high rank in mysticism) is better than the sincerity of Murīdīn (mystical students).’ This is the explanation of this statement. (*Mirāt-ul-Manājīh*, vol. 7, pp. 127)

2. He exposes his worship in front of people to gain their praise. This is condemnable and in this case the ruling for him is to conceal his worship. (*Al-Ḥadīqa-tun-Nadiyyah*, vol. 1, pp. 481)

There is a difference of opinion amongst the scholars as to whether or not a person’s reward will remain valid if he reveals his worship without a valid Shar’i reason after completing it. Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad Ghazālī’s research is that such a man will be rewarded for the deed, but also punished for showing off. He عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ الْخَاتَمَان wrote, ‘It is unlikely that the reward for a deed will be wasted due to something that occurs after performing of that deed, in fact it is likely that he will be rewarded for his previous deed but he will be punished for his showing off after its completion.’

(*Iḥyā-ul-‘Ulūm*, chapter 2, vol. 3, pp. 377)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

2 Conditions for revealing your worship to inspire others

Dear Islamic brothers! Anyone who reveals his worship in order to inspire other people has two responsibilities:

1. He should expose his worship in such a place where he is certain or at least hopeful that people will follow, because many people are emulated by their families but not their neighbours, many are emulated by their neighbours but not people in the market, and many are emulated by local residents. Therefore it is appropriate for him to reveal his worship in front of people who follow him. However a famous scholar is followed by everyone. Therefore, when a non-scholar exposes his worship people might suspect him of showing off or hypocrisy and they will condemn him instead of emulating him, therefore, there is no benefit in exposing his deed. In short, the intention of being emulated is necessary for revealing good deeds and this intention should only be made by someone who is followed by other people and he should be present amongst people who follow him.
2. The second responsibility is for him to look carefully at his heart because it might contain a hidden desire to show off which is compelling him to reveal his worship whilst using emulation as an excuse.

The share of sincere people

Dear Islamic brothers! Fulfilling these aforementioned two responsibilities is the characteristic of sincere people only, therefore it is not appropriate for a (spiritually) weak person to fall into this trap of Satan and his Nafs, thus being destroyed without realising it, because a weak person is like the one who is drowning, who only

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knows a little bit about swimming and he sees some people drowning so he has pity on them and tries to save them but when they grab onto him they will all drown and so will he. The pain of drowning in this world lasts only a few moments but the punishment for showing off is continuous, and will last for a very long time. Never mind weak people, this is such a difficult issue that even scholars and worshippers can slip up here, in that they imitate (spiritually) strong people by exposing their good deeds but their hearts do not remain firm on sincerity and therefore become sinful due to showing off.

Method of recognising the traps of the Nafs and Satan

One way to recognise the traps of the Nafs and Satan is to question your heart in the following way before showing someone your good deed, 'If you were told to hide your deed so that people could imitate a contemporary of yours and you will be still rewarded the same for hiding your deed as you would have been for revealing it', if you still want to reveal your deed and be imitated then you should realise that your intention behind revealing your deed is to show off and not to gain reward, nor to make people follow you or inspire goodness in them, because people would have been inspired even by witnessing somebody else and you would have gained more reward for hiding it. If you did not intend to show off then why is your heart not content with concealing your deed?

(Iḥyā-ul-'Ulūm, vol. 3, pp. 390)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Hide your good deeds

Every Islamic brother should avoid blowing his own trumpet and falling in the trap of the Nafs and Satan, because the human Nafs is

very deceptive, the devil is also on the lookout for [a chance to mislead], and the desire for fame and glory rules the human heart. Revealed deeds are rarely safe from calamities, rather deeds are safer when concealed. If the dangers in revealing deeds are so many that people like us cannot avoid them then it is better for weak people like us to hide our deeds. Therefore, before you reveal any good deed to anybody, take a long hard look at your heart. Lest we should fall prey to the trap of Satan and take the burden of showing off on our head.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Avoiding showing off is harder than doing a deed

It is reported by Sayyidunā Abū Dardā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ that the Beloved and Blessed Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, ‘Certainly doing a deed and then saving it from showing off is harder than doing the deed (in the first place). A man does a (good) deed and a virtue is recorded for him as a deed done secretly and his reward is increased 70 fold, then the devil remains with him (and distracts him) until that person mentions his deed in front of people, then that deed is recorded as a public one (instead of a secret one) and the 70 fold extra reward is removed. Then the devil remains with him until he mentions it a second time in front of people and wants people to talk about and praise him for that deed, then his deed is erased even as a public deed and recorded as showing off. Therefore every man should fear Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, protect his religion and certainly showing off is (minor) polytheism.’ (*Attarghīb Wattarhīb, Kitāb-ul-Muqaddamāh, pp. 29, Ḥadīṣ 56*)

‘Allāmah ‘Abdul Ghanī Nābulusī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْهَامِي stated explaining to us: Since there are satanic tricks and deceptions in showing off and

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sincerity it is necessary that you stay alert. If you cannot tell whether you are being sincere or show off then it is better for you to keep your good deeds secret, because for you, there is no harm in this.

(Al-Ḥadīqa-tun-Nadiyyah, vol. 1, pp. 517)

Mayrā ḥer ‘amal bas Tayray wāsiṭay ḥo

Ker ikhlāṣ aysā ‘aṭā Yā Ilāhī

May my every deed be for Your sake

Grant me such sincerity O my Lord

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

What is ‘Taḥdīṣ-e-Na’mat’?

Dear Islamic brothers! After the completion of any worship mentioning it in front of people in order to express Allah’s blessing upon you is called ‘Taḥdīṣ-e-Na’mat’.

This also contains the possibility of sincerity and showing off and the rule for this is the same as revealing a deed for inspiration, meaning for a leader (who people will emulate) it is better to do this, but if he intends to earn public praise then this is a sin. If doing this leads to showing off in worship then it is a sin however the previous worship will not be wasted, because the worship was performed properly, and mentioning it to other people is a new act that occurred after its completion which is a sin but does not waste the previously performed worship. However, deeds which a person does not have to reveal are better to be kept secret, as this will save you from many dangers. If intention is to teach someone or this person is being emulated then revealing is better than hiding.

(Al-Ḥadīqa-tun-Nadiyyah, vol. 1, pp. 474)

Look at your heart 101 times

Shaykh-e-Ṭarīqat, Amīr-e-Aḥl-e-Sunnat **وَاصْبِرْ كَأَنَّهُمُ الْعَالِيَهُ** explained in *Faizān-e-Sunnat* volume one, page 1453: It is permissible to expose a good deed for the purpose of expressing Allah's favour (Taḥḍīṣ-e-Na'mat). Similarly if a leader reveals a good deed in order to inspire his followers then he is not a show off, but everyone should look 101 times at his heart before exposing a good deed in public, because Satan is very deceiving, and he could use this as an excuse to incite someone to show off.

For example he might whisper in your heart, 'Say to people that you are revealing your worship with the intention of expressing Allah's favour upon you.' When in actual, your heart is dancing inside due to the respect that will be received from people. This is certainly showing off and claiming to express Allah's favour upon you is just doubling the showing off and it also means that you are committing the sin of lying.

For detailed knowledge on this topic please study the chapters about intention, sincerity and showing off in *Iḥyā-ul-'Ulūm*, or *Kīmīyā-e-Sa'ādat* which are Taṣawwuf books by Ḥujjat-ul-Islam Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad Ghazālī **عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْوَالِي**. If only Satan would not prevent us from studying these works, as the wretched Satan will never want a Muslim to perform a sincere and accepted deed.

O Rab **عَزَّوَجَلَّ** enable us to worship with sincerity and keep voluntary fasts and to realise the tricks of the devil that he uses to ruin our good deeds.

أَمِينَ بِجَاهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأَمِينِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

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*Riyā kāriyaun say bachā Yā Ilāhī
Mujhay 'abd-e-mukhlis banā Yā Ilāhī*

*Save me from showing off O my Lord
Make me a sincere bondman O my Lord*

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Showing off is more hidden than the pace of an ant

Dear Islamic brothers! In terms of being open and concealed there are two types of showing off, Riyā-e-Jalī (open showing off) and Riyā-e-Khafī (hidden showing off). Riyā-e-Jalī is that which urges someone to perform a deed and gives encouragement for it. This is clear and explicit showing off. Riyā-e-Khafī is that which is hidden.

(Az-Zawājir 'An-Iqtirāf-il-Kabāir, vol. 1, pp. 81)

The Revered and Renowned Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: There is a type of showing off which is more hidden than the pace of an ant.

(Majma'-uz-Zawāid, Kitāb-uz-Zuhd, vol. 10, pp. 384, Ḥadīṣ 17669)

Avoiding hidden showing off is extremely difficult, except for whoever Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ helps. Here are a few of its types:

4 Types of hidden showing off

1. Showing off that does not encourage any worship but decreases its hardship and makes it easier. For example if someone is habitual of offering Taḥajjud every day but also finds it difficult, however if a guest stays at his house or someone realises that he offers Taḥajjud then he becomes more energetic and he offers happily.

2. Showing off that does not encourage any worship or decrease its hardship but because of this the victim secretly conceals showing off like a stone secretly conceals fire. Identifying this type of showing off is not easy. The biggest symptom of this is that when people learn of a person's worship he feels happy. Many Islamic brothers are sincere in their worship and dislike showing off and also succeed in completing their worship without showing off but when other people learn of their good deeds these worshippers feel happy and forget their hardships during those worships. In this case they conceal showing off the way a stone conceals fire. This happiness indicates hidden showing off because if their hearts were not concerned about other humans then they would not feel happy when people discovered their deeds. Now if the worshippers do not despise this happiness in their hearts then this feeling of showing off grows even stronger and then they try to implicitly or indicatively reveal their good deeds. In fact sometimes they adopt such habits which publicise their deeds, for example speaking softly due to weakness, or keeping their lips dry, or signs of fasting and tears, crying due to fear of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, or yawning and stretching arms due to staying awake at night to offer Tahajjud.
3. This is the showing off when a person shows off without the desire for public attention and without feeling happy at his worship being revealed, however ♦ he feels happy when people greet him with Salām before he greets them, ♦ approach him with humility and respect, ♦ praise him, ♦ fulfil his needs happily, ♦ favour him in sales and purchase (either they sell him things at reduced price or not receive money at all), ♦ when he goes to any gathering they make room specifically for him, ♦ flatter him etc.

However, if someone does not do any of these things properly for him he feels disappointed. It is as though he does not want for his unseen deeds to be revealed but in exchange for them he does want public respect. If he had not done these good deeds then his heart would not desire public respect either. Whenever an Islamic brother falls prey to this type of showing off a veil covers his mind and he is not content with knowing that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ the Knower of hidden emotions is aware of his good deeds. In all these cases he can lose the reward for his worships and only Şiddiqīn (Şiddiq is a title of a very high rank in mysticism) are prevented from this.

Were your needs not fulfilled!

Sayyidunā ‘Alī كَرَّمَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى وَجْهَهُ الْكَرِيمَ said: Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will say to Qārīs on the Day of Judgement, ‘Were you not sold things for reduced prices? Did people not greet you with Salām first? Were your needs not fulfilled?’ One Ḥadīṣ (Qudṣī) states, ‘There is no reward for you because you have (already) taken your complete reward.’

(Az-Zawājir ‘An-Iqtirāf-il-Kabāir, vol. 1, pp. 82)

Do not suffer loss

Sayyidunā Wāḥb Bin Munabbih رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ said: Whilst travelling in the path of Allah, a saint said to his companions, ‘We sacrificed our money and children out of fear of disobedience but we fear that the disobedience that rich men will encounter due to their fortunes is less than the damage that we could encounter in our faith, because when one of us meets another person he desires respect for his religious status, and when he buys something he wishes for it be sold to him at a reduced cost due to his religious status.’

When news of this (conversation) reached the king he came with an army to the saint. There were so many troops that they filled a mountain and field. The saint asked one of them, 'What is this?' The man answered, 'The king has come to meet you.' He said to a servant, 'Bring me some food.' The servant came back with some spinach, olives and dates. The scholar opened his mouth wide and began to eat large morsels. The king asked, 'Where is your leader?' People replied, 'This is him.' The king asked, 'How are you?' The saint replied, 'The same as common people.' Listening to this, the king responded, 'There is no good in this man', and returned. After the king's departure the saint said, 'I thank Allah ﷺ for making you turn away from me with condemnation.'

(Iḥyā-ul-'Ulūm, chapter 4, vol. 3, pp. 375, 376)

May Allah ﷺ have mercy on him and forgive us without accountability for his sake!

4. There is a type of Riyā-e-Khafī which is specific to preachers, teachers and scholars. If any of them is a good speaker due to his expertise in language skills, extensive study and strong memory, or he has a good understanding of Shari'ah and Tariqah, which leads to people admiring him, but then if another scholar or preacher causes public reformation or if people leave this person and crowd around another scholar or Shaykh then he feels displeasure, then this proves that he has become a victim of Riyā-e-Khafī.

Similarly during a sermon if a wealthy or popular figure appears he will terminate his sermon to welcome or praise him or he will begin to speak more softly or articulately. On the other hand if he extends the length of his sermon with the intention of rectifying him in order to make him repent of his sins and

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evil deeds and reform him then this is a good intention but even in this case there is a risk of being involved in showing off. Therefore a preacher should look at all humans equally and not distinguish the rich from the poor just on the basis of their money or distinguish bigger people from smaller ones. In this way **إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ** he will be safe from showing off.

(Al-Hadīqa-tun-Nadiyyah, vol. 1 pp. 476/477)

Allah's sincere bondmen

Dear Islamic brothers! Allah's sincere bondmen always remain afraid of Riyā-e-Khafi and attempt to avoid being deceived by other people due to their good deeds. These blessed people struggle harder to hide their good deeds more than sinners struggle to hide their sins, only because they wish for their deeds to be sincere so that on the Day of Judgement Allah **عَزَّوَجَلَّ** will reward them in front of all people and they realise that in the court of Allah **عَزَّوَجَلَّ** only sincere deeds are acceptable on the Day of Judgement. They are also aware that on the Day of Judgement they will be extremely destitute and hungry and that their money and children will be of no avail except those who appear in the court of Allah **عَزَّوَجَلَّ** with a pure heart (protected from sins). No father will help his son, even the greatest saints (Ṣiddiqīn) will be solely concerned about themselves. Every soul shall be shouting '*myself, myself*'. When this will be the condition of even the greatest saints then what will common people be experiencing? Any person who finds in his heart the distinction between children, madmen, and other people becoming aware of his deeds will experience possibilities of showing off, because if he knew that only Allah **عَزَّوَجَلَّ** grants benefit or harm and that only He **عَزَّوَجَلَّ** has power over everything and no one else has the power to do anything, then it would be the same for him whether his deed is revealed to a child

or any other person and there would be no difference in the impact on his heart by his deed being revealed to a child or an adult.

(Az-Zawājir ‘An-Iqtirāf-il-Kabāir, vol. 1, pp. 82)

Remember all these signs of showing off are for yourself and not for anyone else because these matters are related to the heart and no one can know the contents of another person’s heart. Therefore do not use these signs to make negative judgements about anyone else because negative judgements are Ḥarām and similarly suspecting another person, exposing his faults, or searching for these signs inside him in order to embarrass him is also Ḥarām. *(Iḥyā-ul-‘Ulūm, chapter 3, vol. 2, pp. 150; Kitāb-ul-Amr Bil-Ma’rūf, vol. 2, pp. 399 – summarized)*

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Feeling happy when you are praised!

Dear Islamic brothers! Whenever anyone is praised for a good deed it is natural for him to feel happy, but you must remember that there are some cases for feeling happy on your (truthful) praise. This happiness can be good or bad, therefore whenever we are (truthfully) praised we should kindly prohibit the one praising us. If he persists in praising us then instead of boasting we should make good intentions about the happiness entering our hearts. There are four cases for good happiness:

1. Make your mind that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has blessed me by revealing my good deeds to people because He عَزَّوَجَلَّ is the One who veils good deeds and sins. Veiling my sins and revealing my good deeds is the grace of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. What greater blessing could there be for a bondman that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ conceals his sins and

reveals his good deeds! So a person should be happy due to this merciful glance at him by Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and not be happy due to public praise and respect (and this would not be showing off), as Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has stated:

قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا^ط

Please declare, 'Only Allah's grace and only His mercy. And on it let them rejoice. That is better than all their wealth.'

[Kanz-ul-Īmān (Translation of Quran)] (Part 11, Sūrah Yūnus, verse 58)

Sayyidunā Abū Zār رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ reported that the Greatest and Holiest Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ was asked, 'If a man does a good deed and people praise him (is this showing off or not)?' He صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied, 'This is early good news for him (i.e. in this worldly life).'

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb-ul-Bir Waṣ-Ṣilah, pp. 1420, Ḥadīṣ 2642)

I.e. this is not showing off, rather it is a sign of acceptance that people praise him themselves. In short showing off is related to the intention of the doer. If he does it with the intention of public attention and fame then this is showing off.

(Mirāt-ul-Manājīḥ, vol. 7, pp. 129, – summarized)

2. Another form of good happiness is if he feels happy because he thinks that if Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has concealed his sins and revealed his good deeds in this world then He عَزَّوَجَلَّ will do this in the afterlife as well. The Beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, 'If Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ conceals a bondman's sins in this world then He عَزَّوَجَلَّ will conceal them in the afterlife as well.'

(Kanz-ul-'Ummāl, Kitāb-ut-Taubaḥ, vol. 4, pp. 97, Ḥadīṣ 10296)

3. Or he can think that the people who become aware of my good deeds will be encouraged to follow me and hence I will receive double reward, one reward for actually doing the deed with the intention of concealing it in the first place and secondly for the deed being revealed and thus being followed by public, because a leader is rewarded for all the individuals that follow him without any reduction in their reward, therefore feeling happy for this reason is fine because it is natural to feel joy and happiness when seeing benefit.

Şadr-ush-Sharī'ah, Badr-ut-Ṭarīqah, 'Allāmah, Maulānā Muftī Muhammad Amjad 'Alī A'zamī عليه رحمۃ اللہ القوی wrote: This is if he did not do the worship for people to discover and think of him as a pious man, but rather he worshipped only for Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. Then after the worship if people realise and he feels natural happiness for being seen in a good state then this natural happiness is not showing off. (*Bahār-e-Shar'at*, part 16, pp. 238)

Sayyidunā Abū Ḥurayrah رضي الله تعالى عنه enquired, 'O the Noble Prophet صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَاٰلِهٖ وَسَلَّم! I was in my home in my praying area, a man came and saw me which made me feel happy that he saw me in this state (is this showing off)?' He صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَاٰلِهٖ وَسَلَّم replied, 'Abū Ḥurayrah! There are two rewards for you, one for hidden worship and the second for revealed worship.'¹

(*Sharḥ-us-Sunnah, Kitāb-ur-Raqāq*, vol. 7, pp. 346, Ḥadīth 4036)

¹ Meaning you started your worship with sincerity in that you were praying in a corner of your house, and then Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ revealed your deed, which is His grace. You felt happy knowing that a Muslim did not see you in an undesirable condition rather in a good condition, and this happiness is also due to Allah's grace, for which you will be rewarded too because this joy was due to gratitude not pride. (*Mirāt-ul-Manājīh*, vol. 7, pp. 133)

4. Sometimes a man feels happy because Allah ﷻ gave him the ability to do a good deed which earned him the respect and love of other people, because some Muslim sinners ridicule and hurt worshippers when they see them. A sign of sincerity in this case is that the way he feels happy when he is praised he should feel happy when other people are praised also.

Condemnable happiness is when a man is happy to see other people respecting and honouring him and he desires that they praise him, fulfil his needs, walk behind him., etc.

(Az-Zawājir, vol. 1, pp. 77)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Tremble for fear of Allah ﷻ!

Whenever someone pays you a complement then think carefully (do Fikr-e-Madīnah¹): Does the reason for this compliment actually exist in me or not? For example, someone said that I am pious and righteous, but do I really fit the Shar'ī criteria for righteousness/piety? Even if this compliment is true then how do I deserve the credit? It is a gift from my Creator ﷻ, and also deeds depend upon one's death, yet I do not know whether or not I will die as a believer. What if I am summoned in front of these very people and told, 'O sinner! O deceiver! O show off! Were you not ashamed to buy worldly objects in exchange for Allah's obedience? You were looking at people's hearts but were not content with Allah's merciful glance at you. You only loved His bondmen not Allah ﷻ. You beautified

¹ Fikr-e-Madīnah is a term used in Dawat-e-Islami which refers to the act of holding oneself accountable for sins, pondering over grave and resurrection, and filling in Madani In'āmāt booklet whilst reflecting upon virtuous and evil deeds.

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yourself in ways disliked by Allah ﷺ for the sake of people, and you moved far from Allah ﷺ to get close to people.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Training ground for showing off

These days the completion of Hifẓ-ul-Quran by a boy or girl is usually followed by a fancy celebratory event in which he or she is rewarded with flower garlands, various gifts and piles of compliments. In *Faizān-e-Sunnat* volume 1 page 1448 Amīr-e-Ahl-e-Sunnat دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمُ الْعَالِيَهُ invited the organisers of such events to do ‘Fikr-e-Madīnah’: Family members probably think that they are encouraging these young children, but I apologetically would like to comment that ‘it was due to your child’s high-spiritedness that he or she completed his or her Hifẓ’. However it is certainly important to encourage a child at the beginning of his or her Hifẓ in order to motivate him or her to complete the Hifẓ. On the other hand you need to ask yourself whether in a Hifẓ-ceremony your Hāfīẓ child is being encouraged or being pumped with vanity. What if our ‘blessed Hifẓ-ceremonies’ are actually training grounds of showing off for these plain and simple Hāfīẓ children!

I have searched rigorously for sincerity in such ceremonies but I have been unable to find it. In fact sometimes, مَعَآذَ اللَّهِ ﷺ, even photos are taken. Also the sin of taking photos occurs in many ‘fasting ceremonies’ of small Madanī boys and girls. إِنَّ شَاءَ اللَّهُ ﷺ there would be more blessings if these ceremonies were simple, if instead of inviting a crowd of people, you were to present them in the courts of Islamic scholars and request them to pray for the child to remember and act upon the Holy Quran for the rest of his life.

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In summary, you should think carefully about what benefits you will have in the afterlife in exchange for this ceremony you are about to arrange? If your heart is really satisfied that your intention behind this Hifz-ceremony is not to show off and you are also certain that your Madanī child is in no danger of showing off, meaning you have gifted him the best education about sincerity, then surely arrange the ceremony. May Allah ﷻ accept it!

(Faizān-e-Sunnat, vol. 1, chapter: Blessings of Ramadan, pp. 1448)

أَمِينَ بِجَاهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأَمِينِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Showing off even in avoiding sins

Hakīm-ul-Ummat Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ الْمَعَانِ wrote: Piety has two components: (1) Performing good deeds and (2) Avoiding sins, and the main component is to avoid sins. Good deeds are easy but avoiding Ḥarām things and evils are extremely difficult.

(Mirāt-ul-Manājīḥ, vol. 6, pp. 634)

Dear Islamic brothers! The way that good deeds can become victim to showing off it is also possible to show off whilst avoiding sins because avoiding a sin is also a good deed and the devil will never want any Muslim to succeed in earning any reward. Therefore if a person abstains from a sin so that other people call him a pious person who fears Allah ﷻ, and a worshipper then this is total showing off. Therefore even in avoiding sins your intention should be to please Allah ﷻ. You can make secondary intentions additionally (to refrain from a sin) such as:

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1. People might see me committing this sin and copy me which will increase my sin.
2. This sin will degrade me in the eyes of other people and they will no longer follow me and no longer accept my call towards righteousness, and thus I will be deprived of the reward for reforming other people, etc.

Sign of sincerity

A sign of sincerity in avoiding a sin is to avoid the sin in solitude just as one avoids it in public. Anyway, sins must be avoided at all costs and one should continue his efforts to create sincerity in his heart.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

How is it to leave worship due to fear of showing off?

Dear Islamic brothers! Satan might whisper in your heart saying, ‘If showing off is so dangerous and it is so difficult to avoid it then don’t do any good deeds at all so that at least you will be safe from the punishment of showing off.’ To such Islamic brothers I would say that it is unwise to refrain from doing good deeds due to fear of showing off because then you will lose out rewards on both sincerity and a good deed. Sayyidunā Fuḍayl Bin ‘Iyāḍ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ said, ‘To leave a deed for the sake of people is showing off and to do a good deed for other people is (minor) polytheism, and sincerity is that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ saves you from both these things.’ (Az-Zawājir, vol. 1, pp. 76)

Therefore instead of abstaining from doing good deeds we should rectify our intention because if a fly lands on your nose then you would swat the fly away and not cut off your nose.

Just the thought of showing off is not a sin

Dear Islamic brothers! Just the thought of showing off entering your heart and merely feeling the inclination to show off is not harmful, because Satan exists with everyone and it is not possible for a human to totally prevent Satan from whispering in his heart or to prevent himself from being inclined to his whispers, that is why the devil never stops whispering in human hearts. However we should not let these whispers settle in our hearts and fight the tricks of the Satan with the weapon of religious knowledge, resentment and rejection.

(Al-Ḥadīqa-tun-Nadiyyah, vol. 1, pp. 496)

Sayyidunā Ibn ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُمَا reported the following Ḥadīṣ of the Greatest and Holiest Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ: All praise is for Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ who converted the trickery and deception of Satan into whispers. *(Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Kitāb-ul-Adab, vol. 4, pp. 425, Ḥadīṣ 5112)*

Sayyidunā Abū Ḥāzim عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْأَكْرَمُ said, ‘If a (negative) thought arises from your Nafs and is desired by your Nafs but you continue to rebuke it then these satanic whispers and negative thoughts from the Nafs will not harm you as long as you use rejection and resentment to prevent Satan and your Nafs from succeeding.’

(Iḥyā-ul-‘Ulūm, vol. 3, pp. 385)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Make Satan fail

Dear Islamic brothers! The aim of Satan is to prevent us from doing good deeds and indulge us in sins, so instead of refraining from good deeds due to fear of showing off you should do excessive good deeds in order to humiliate and disgrace him [Satan]. Satan is like a

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barking dog, in that if we go close to it and try to shut it up it will bark even more and if we ignore it and go along our way then it will eventually stop barking. Similarly Satan at first advises us to avoid good deeds, if we ignore his advice and do good deeds, he tries to trick us into making such a mistake for which Allah ﷻ rejects that deed. If he still fails then he whispers thoughts of showing off into our hearts and incites us to show off. If we do not bother about that as well, and continue to do Fikr-e-Madīnāh and stay focussed on good deeds then he will whisper into our hearts and say, ‘Your deeds are not sincere. You are a show off. Your efforts are pointless. What good is there in an insincere deed?’ Thus he remains clung on to us to convince us to refrain from doing that good deed in whatever way he can, and if we refrain from the deed then Satan has succeeded. Therefore whatever happens, do not let him rejoice, and ensure that you remain steadfast on good deeds so that he loses hope in misguiding us and becomes despaired. This would be our success and his failure!

Sayyidunā Ibrāhīm Taymī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ الْقَوِي said, ‘Satan calls man to a door of sin, but the man does not comply with him and instead he does a good deed. When Satan sees this he leaves the man.’ He عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ تَعَالٰى also said, ‘When Satan sees you hesitating (you sometimes do a good deed and sometimes not) then he feels interested in you, but when he sees you steadfast on good deeds he hates you and leaves you alone.’ (*Ihyā-ul-‘Ulūm*, vol. 3, pp. 386)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Will we save ourselves from Satan if we stop our good deeds?

Then what guarantee is there that we will be safe from Satan if we discontinue our good deeds due to fear of showing off. Remember,

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Satan will still continue to pursue us, in fact he might possibly say to us, ‘People say that you discontinued your good deed for sincerity and you have no desire for fame, now you are popular for your sincerity so you should leave this place.’ Even if we leave that place and suppose that we start living in a cave or underground, he will make our hearts feel joy by whispering to us, ‘People think that you are an ascetic and they are aware of your isolation and respect you for this reason.’ وَعَلَىٰ هَذَا الْقِيَاسِ [and so on...]

Thus at every single step of the way he will continue to create problems for us. Therefore we should not discontinue good deeds for fear of showing off and we should not either pay much attention to whispers of Satan.

Example of a person who discontinues good deed for fear of showing off

Hujjat-ul-Islam Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad Ghazālī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْوَالِي wrote in *Ihyā-ul-'Ulūm*: A man who refrains from doing a good deed for fear of showing off is like a man whose master gives him some wheat which is mixed with other seeds that look like wheat and he instructs the servant to separate the two so that only wheat remains. Now the servant fears that he may not be able to completely clean and separate the wheat, so consequently he does not do anything at all. Similar to him is a man who completely discontinues a good deed due to fear of insincerity and thinks to himself, ‘If I cannot do it sincerely then what is the point of doing it at all?’

(*Ihyā-ul-'Ulūm*, vol. 3, pp. 395)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

What will people say?

Dear Islamic brothers! A person might refrain from doing a good deed because he fears being called a show off by other people and fears them falling into the sin of evil-assumption about another Muslim, therefore he believes that by avoiding a good deed he is actually saving people from committing a sin. This is also a satanic trick, because firstly this man is the one who is wrongfully making a negative-assumption about other Muslims (that they would commit the sin of evil assumption) which was not his right. Also even if this was true it would not have harmed him, but he has shot himself in the foot by refraining from doing a good deed and losing out on an opportunity to accumulate reward.

Secondly, refraining from a good deed due to fear of being called a show off, is also showing off, because if this man was not bothered about being praised or insulted by other people then he would not be bothered about whether or not people call him a show off or sincere man. (*Ihyā-ul-‘Ulūm, vol. 3, pp. 395*)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Signs of a show off

Sayyidunā ‘Alī-ul-Murtaḍā كَرَّمَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى وَجْهَهُ الْكَرِيمُ said: There are three signs of a show off:

1. When alone he is lazy in deeds but when in public he is energetic,
1. when praised he increases his deeds,
2. when criticised he decreases his deeds. (*Az-Zawājir, vol. 1, pp. 75*)

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Sayyidunā Khuwājāh Ḥasan Baṣrī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْقَوِي used to say, ‘Any person who humiliates himself in front of a gathering is actually praising himself and this is also one of the signs of showing off.’

(*Tanbīh-ul-Mughtarrīn*, pp.24)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

We are not showing off are we?

Dear Islamic brothers! We should very honestly analyse ourselves. Are we lazy in worship when alone but energetic in public? Do we unnecessarily expose our good deeds to people after doing them? Then if someone praises us do we feel proud and increase our deed? Do we feel sad if no one praises us and decrease our religious deeds? Do we enjoy worshipping in public but not in solitude? Do we criticise ourselves in front of other people in order to impress them? etc.

Repent of showing off

Dear Islamic brothers! If the answer to these questions is yes then the first thing you should immediately do is repent and make efforts to be sincere. Lest we should pass away before repenting and face the harms of showing off in the afterlife.

Blessing of repenting of showing off

Ḥakīm-ul-Ummat Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ الْمَلَأَن wrote: Bear in mind that that showing off does not make a deed impermissible, rather it creates a possibility of it not being accepted. If a show off finally repents of his sin then he does not have to redo his former insincere deeds, but rather due to the blessing of his repentance his former insincere deeds will also be accepted. It is extremely difficult

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for any worship to be absolutely free from any amount of showing off, and no one should refrain from performing good deeds due the fear of showing off but rather he should pray for safety from showing off. (*Mirāt-ul-Manājīh*, vol. 7, pp. 127)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Cure the disease of showing off

Dear Islamic brothers! If we feel signs of this disease of showing off in our hearts then we should not delay its treatment after repentance. When we attempt to treat our inward character then إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ our outward will also be sound. The Mercy for the entire creation, the Guide to the path of salvation صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, 'Whoever rectifies his inward Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will rectify his outward.'

(*Kanz-ul-'Ummāl*, *Kitāb-ul-Akhlāq*, vol. 3, pp. 13, *Ḥadīṣ* 5273 – summarized)

Do not despair

We should not despair and say, 'Only great saints رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى can succeed in being sincere, but we cannot', and not even attempt to be sincere. Dear Islamic brothers! There is no doubt that although it is not impossible but certainly extremely difficult for sinners such as ourselves to perfectly emulate the friends of Allah, however it would be extremely foolish for us to use this as an excuse to avoid any attempts of rectifying ourselves. Even though we cannot be exactly the same as these auspicious individuals but in light of their biographies and teachings at least we can rectify our intentions and our matters. At least we can keep or Nafs away from self-gratification. At least we can consider what is beneficial or harmful for us in the afterlife and what pleases or displeases our Almighty Lord عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Do not be afraid of difficulty

The older a disease gets the harder it becomes to treat. So we should make our mind that just as we are ready to take unpleasant bitter medicines in order to cure our physical illnesses similarly we will endure every form of difficulty in order to treat this inner disease of showing off **إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ**. Enduring these difficulties will be difficult in the beginning but gets easier over time. Just as we find it very hard to do Wudū with cold water in extremely cold temperature but once we muster up the courage to pour the first few drops on our body the rest gets easier.

Gham say khūgar hūwā insān to miṭ jātā ḥay gham

Mushkilayn itnī paṛīn mujh per kay āsān ḥo gayīn

*When man gets used to sadness then it goes away
I suffered so many hardships that now they are easy*

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

10 CURES FOR SHOWING OFF

First cure

Ask Allah **عَزَّوَجَلَّ** for help

Dear Islamic brothers! Prayer is the weapon of a believer, we should use it in our war against Satan and our Nafs and pray to Allah **عَزَّوَجَلَّ** saying, ‘O Allah **عَزَّوَجَلَّ** cure me from the sickness of showing off. Fill my empty hands with the wealth of sincerity. I am fighting a war against an enemy [Satan] that can see me but is invisible to me, but You see him – O Allah **عَزَّوَجَلَّ** save me from the trickery deception of this enemy. O Allah **عَزَّوَجَلَّ** I seek Your protection from being

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perceived as admirable and pious in public but worthy of punishment in Your court.'

Mayrā ħer 'amal bas Tayray wāsiṭay ħo

Ker ikhlāṣ aysā 'aṭā Yā Ilāhī

May all my deeds for Your sake only

Grant me such sincerity O Allah

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Second cure

Focus on the harms of showing off

Dear Islamic brothers! What we should do is focus on the harms of showing off because people love a thing that they perceive as being useful and delicious but when they find it out being harmful then they avoid it. For example, let's say an Islamic brother likes honey due to its taste and sweetness but if someone tells him that this honey which you are about to drink has poison in it then instead of thinking about its sweetness he will think about its poison and definitely refrain from drinking it in any case.

Similarly exposing your good deeds in front of other people and receiving praise from them is definitely enjoyable for your Nafs but instead of thinking about this enjoyment if we think about the harms of showing off then it will be easier for us to avoid it. Is it not enough harm that because of showing off in spite of working so hard to do a good deed you will receive no reward? What do you think about a labourer who works hard all day long in undesirable conditions but when pay-time comes he is refused any salary because he made a mistake during his job?

Showing Off

How sad it is that a show off will be subjected to torture along without being deprived of reward! How foolish is a man who can sell something for millions but ends up selling it for a few pennies just for temporary pleasures! This is how foolish a worshipper is who desires to captivate people instead of seeking the closeness of his Creator **عَزَّوَجَلَّ**. It is as though this show off exchanges the love of people for Allah's disobedience, he seeks the praise of people in exchange for Allah's condemnation, he desires the happiness of people in exchange for Allah's displeasure, he sells the eternal blessings of Paradise in exchange for this mortal world. Also bear in mind that to please every single human is like digging a stream of milk, in that if some people approve of something there will be many who do not.

Example of a show off

A show off is like a man who enters a market to shop with a pocketful or bagful of stones. When people see him they say in amazement, 'Look at how full his pocket is!' When he opens his pocket or bag in front of a shop owner he will be embarrassed and he will be rebuked. He will receive no benefit except the initial public praise. Similarly, show offs gain nothing but public fame and no reward in the afterlife.

(Derived from: Az-Zawājir, vol. 1, pp. 76)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Third cure

Eliminate the causes

Dear Islamic brothers! Every disease has a cause. If the cause is eliminated then so is the disease. Showing off has three primary causes,

if we succeed in eliminating these three causes then **إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ** it will be very easy to save ourselves from it. Here are the three causes: (1) Desire for praise (2) Fear of condemnation (3) Greed for money.

How to control desire for praise?

In order to control our desire for praise we ought to ponder about the following disadvantages:

5 Disadvantages of desiring fame

1. The Beloved and Blessed Prophet **صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ** said, ‘Avoid mixing the obedience of Allah **عَزَّوَجَلَّ** with love of public praise so that your deeds are not ruined.’

(Al-Firdaus-ul-Akhabār lil-Daylmī, vol. 1, pp. 223, Ḥadīṣ 1567)

2. The Greatest and Holiest Prophet **صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ** said, ‘The love of richness and status increase hypocrisy in a Muslim’s heart just like water increases the growth of grass.’

(Kanz-ul-‘Ummāl, vol. 15, pp. 95/96, Ḥadīṣ 40652, 40661, 40663)

3. The Noblest Prophet **صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ** said, ‘Two hungry wolves that are let loose on a herd of sheep do not cause as much damage as the desire for fortune and respect cause damage to a Muslim’s religion.’

(Kanz-ul-‘Ummāl, Kitāb-ul-Akhlāq, vol. 3, pp. 185, Ḥadīṣ 7433)

*Raḥzan nay lūī lī kamāyī
Faryād ḥay Khizr-e-Ḥāshimī say*

*A bandit stole all my earnings
Help me O Ḥāshimī Khizr*

(Ḥadāiq-e-Bakhshish)

Showing Off

4. The Prophet of Raḥmah, the Intercessor of Ummaḥ, the Owner of Jannah ﷺ said, ‘Love of praise makes a man blind and deaf.’ (*Kanz-ul-‘Ummāl, Kitāb-ul-Akhlāq, vol. 3, pp. 185, Ḥadīṣ 7428*)
5. Sayyidunā Abū ‘Abdullāḥ Anṭākī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْبَاقِي used to say, ‘Any man who desires sincerity in his outer actions but his heart looks at people is in pursuit of something impossible, because sincerity is water for the heart and showing off kills it.’
(*Tanbīḥ-ul-Mughtarrīn, pp. 24*)

Reflect (do Fikr-e-Madīnah)

Try to reflect (do Fikr-e-Madīnah) in this manner: For people to say a few words in my praise or look at me in an admirable way or for me to gain fame is undoubtedly very enjoyable for my Nafs but these compliments cannot guarantee success for me in the court of Allah ﷻ on the Day of Judgement because on that day these same people will themselves be shivering with fear of punishment. Their praise will not increase my livelihood or life-span or grant me any sort of status in the afterlife so what benefit is there in wanting compliments from such people? Why should I do good deeds in order to show these people, rather I should do them for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ.

*Āj bantā ḥūn mu’aziz jo khūlay ḥashr mayn ‘ayb
Ḥāye ruswāyī kī āfat mayn phānsūn gā Yā Rab*

*Today I act respectable but if my faults are exposed on
the Day of Judgement
Ah! I will fall into the calamity of disgrace*

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Liking false praise is Ḥarām

A'lā Ḥaḍrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ wrote in *Fatāwā Razawiyyah* volume 21, page 597: If someone enjoys his false praise, and he wants people to compliment him for qualities that he does not really possess then this is clearly and absolutely Ḥarām. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ said:

لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا آتَوْا وَيُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يُحْمَدُوا بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا
فَلَا تَحْسَبْنَهُمْ بِمَقَارَةِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٨٨﴾

Do not ever think of those who rejoice for their deeds and wish to be praised without doing (good deeds) – do not ever think that they are far away from the punishment; and for them is a painful punishment.

[Kanz-ul-Īmān (Translation of Quran)] (Part 3, Sūrah Āl-e-‘Imrān, verse 188)

When is it recommended to like being praised?

A'lā Ḥaḍrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ also wrote: However if the compliment is true, even with a common interpretation, such as Shams-ul-Aimmaḥ (the sun of scholars), Fakhr-ul-‘Ulamā (the pride of scholars), Tāj-ul-‘Ārifin (the crown of saints) etc., (such titles are in comparison to other scholars of the same era or city), and he does not feel happy because he is complimented in fact he feels happy because the public will religiously benefit from these compliments by appreciating this scholar and accepting his advice wholeheartedly then this is not in actual fact ‘loving self-praise’ in fact it is ‘loving the welfare of Muslims’ which is a part of our faith.

It states in *Tarīqah Muhammadiyyah* and *Ḥadīqah Nadiyyah*: There are three causes for the desire to rule and love, secondly he wants power for the purpose of establishing justice, glorifying Islam

and rectifying the society. If this is free from prohibited things such as showing off, deception, missing any Wājib or Sunnah then not only is this permissible in fact it is recommended (and a cause of earning reward). Allah ﷻ narrated the statement of pious people (that they pray to Him saying the following), ‘O Allah ﷻ! Make us leaders for pious and fearful people.’ (*Fatāwā Razawiyyah*, vol. 21, pp. 597)

How do we cure the fear of public criticism?

We can cure the fear of public criticism by thinking that public criticism will not make my death come any earlier, or decrease my livelihood. If my Creator ﷻ is pleased with me then the anger of people can cause me absolutely no harm. These people are themselves helpless. They do not own any benefit or harm or life or death for themselves so why should I perform or leave good deeds just to avoid their criticism. I must only fear my Creator’s wrath.

Certainly, any person who feels a difference in his heart due to his deeds being known by children, madmen or adults will show off, because if he believed that the Bestower of benefit or harm, the One who has power over everything is only Allah ﷻ and no one else possesses any personal power over anything then it would not make a difference to him whether his deeds are known by children, madmen or adults and the awareness of his deeds by children or adults would not change the state of his heart.

How do we cure our greed for fortune?

In order to save ourselves from greed of fortune we must make our mind that in terms of giving or taking wealth the hearts of men are controlled by Allah ﷻ. Humans are simply dependant, and only Allah ﷻ grants livelihood. A man who covets other people’s money will one day be humiliated, and even if he succeeds in acquiring

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another person's wealth he will have to bear the burden of other person's favour. So when it is not even certain that I will acquire wealth and I risk being disgraced then why should I impress people by showing them my worship in order to attain money from them? Instead I ought to worship in order to please my Lord عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Save yourself from loving this world

These three causes of showing off are related to this world, so therefore if we remove the love of this world from our hearts then it will not be difficult to avoid these three causes, and consequently إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ it will become extremely simple to save ourselves from showing off. The Beloved and Blessed Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, 'Love of this world is the root of all evil.'

(Mishkāt-ul-Maṣābih, Kitāb-ur-Raqāq, vol. 2, pp. 250, Ḥadīṣ 5212)

*Pīchā mayrā dunyā kī maḥabbat say chūṛā day
Yā Rab mujḥay dīwānaḥ Madīnaḥ kā banā day*

*Save me from me love of this world
O Lord make me devoted to Madīnaḥ*

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Fourth cure

Be sincere

The Revered and Renowned Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, 'Act sincerely for Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ because Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ only accepts deeds that

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are performed sincerely for Him, and do not say, I have done this deed for Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and a relationship.'

(Sunan Dār Quṭnī, Kitāb-uṭ-Ṭahārah, vol. 1, pp. 73, Ḥadīṣ 130)

Dear Islamic brothers! Just as we use good quality soap or washing powder to wash stains away from clothes similarly in order to clean the dirt of showing off from our hearts we must use the soap of sincerity. Sincerity is the opposite of showing off. In order to achieve this magnificent blessing please focus on its excellence:

6 Excellences of sincerity

1. The Holy Quran states:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الْآخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُ فِي حَرْثِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ
الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ نَصِيبٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

Whoever desires harvest of the Hereafter, We increase the harvest for him; and whoever desires the harvest of this world – We shall give him part of it, and he has no share in the Hereafter.

[Kanz-ul-Īmān (Translation of Quran)] (Part 25, Sūrah Ash-Shūrā, verse 20)

The renowned Quranic commentator, Ḥakīm-ul-Ummat Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْعَمَّتَان commented about the aforementioned verse saying: (Whoever desires harvest of the Hereafter) meaning he aspires for the pleasure of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and happiness of the Beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and he does not act to show off. (We increase the harvest for him) meaning We grant him the ability to do even more good deeds,

and make good deeds easy for him, and We will reward him unlimitedly for his deeds. (*Whoever desires the harvest of this world*) meaning someone who acts only for worldly benefit, he becomes a scholar or Ḥājī for fame, or he fights for war spoils. (*We shall give him part of it, and he has no share in the Hereafter*) because he did not act for the afterlife.

We learn that a show off does not receive any reward even though according to Shari'ah his worship is valid. A Ṣalāh which one offers to show off will fulfill a person's Farḍ but not earn him any reward that is why the Holy Quran limits this to (no reward in the afterlife).' (*Nūr-ul-'Irfān, pp. 774*)

2. The Beloved Prophet ﷺ said, 'Be sincere in your religion even a few good deeds will suffice for you.'

(*Al-Mustadrak, Kitāb-ur-Raqāq, vol. 5, pp. 435, Ḥadīṣ 7914*)

3. Sayyidunā Anas رضى الله تعالى عنه reported the following statement of the Noblest Prophet ﷺ, 'Whoever passed away whilst being sincere for Allah عزوجل in all his deeds and punctual in Ṣalāh and fasting (then) Allah عزوجل is pleased with him.'

(*Al -Mustadrak, vol. 3, pp. 65, Raqm-ul-Ḥadīṣ 3330 Multaqaṭan*)

4. Sayyidunā Anas Bin Mālīk رضى الله تعالى عنه reported the following statement of the Prophet of Raḥmah ﷺ: In the end of times my Ummah will split into three groups. One group shall worship Allah عزوجل sincerely, the second will worship Allah عزوجل to show off, and third will worship in order to seize public wealth. When Allah عزوجل resurrects them on the Day of Judgement He عزوجل will ask the one that seized public wealth, 'I swear by My greatness and glory! What was your intention

by worshipping Me?’ He will say, ‘I swear by Your greatness and glory! To show off to other people.’ Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will say, ‘I do not accept any of his deeds. Take him to Hell.’

Then He عَزَّوَجَلَّ will ask the one that worshipped sincerely, ‘I swear by My greatness and glory! What was your intention by worshipping Me?’ He will answer, ‘I swear by Your greatness and glory! You know my intention better. I only intended to please You.’ Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will say, ‘My bondman spoke the truth. Take him to Paradise.’ (*Al-Mu’jam-ul-Awsaṭ*, vol. 4, pp. 30, *Raqm* 5105)

5. Sayyidunā Anas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ reported that the Revered and Renowned Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, ‘Whoever intends to earn the afterlife, Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will place contentment in his heart and solve his necessities and the world will come to him being disgraced, and whoever intends to acquire the world then Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will place poverty in front of his eyes and would keep his matters unsolved and he will only have access to the world till the extent of what is written for him.’

(*Mishkāṭ-ul-Maṣābīḥ*, *Kitāb-ur-Raqāq*, vol. 2, pp. 267, *Ḥadīṣ* 5320)

Hakīm-ul-Ummat, Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ الْمَلَأَن gave the following comments on this Ḥadīṣ: Meaning a sincere person is blessed with contentment by Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and his different necessities come together in one place so that all his needs are fulfilled whilst sitting at home. He does not need to walk towards his necessities in fact his necessities come to him. Whoever devotes himself to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, becomes a beloved bondman of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. An animal that is tied to a peg finds all its necessities brought to it.

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The world here refers to worldly blessings and also worldly people, meaning worldly possessions and worldly people come to him as servants as is being experienced at the courts of saints.

Woḥ kay is dar kā ḥuwā, khalq-e-Khudā us kī ḥuyī

Woḥ kay is dar say phīrā, Allah us say phīr gayā

Poverty in this Ḥadīṣ means dependency upon other people, i.e. always needing them, being pushed around on their doorsteps, and needing to flatter them. Meaning his heart will remain stressed, in that sometimes he runs after bread, sometimes after clothes, and sometimes for other necessities, and he will not have any time to remember Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. This is proven by experience. Meaning his running around will not increase his world, rather only his worries will increase. He will only gain as much of the world as is destined for him.

(Mirāt-ul-Manājīḥ, vol. 7, pp. 131)

6. The Greatest and Holiest Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ has stated, ‘If anyone among you performs any deed in a strong rock that has neither door nor skylight, still his deed will become known, and what is predestined will take place under any circumstance.’

(Al-Musnad lil-Imām Aḥmad Bin Ḥanbal, vol. 4, pp. 57, Ḥadīṣ 11230)

Ḥakīm-ul-Ummat Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān Na’īmī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ الْعَلِيِّ commented on this Ḥadīṣ: The meaning of this blessed statement is, why do you ruin your reward by showing off? Act sincerely, be secretive, and Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will publicise your deeds Himself. The hearts of people will automatically consider you pious. This has been proven by experience, in that some people offer Tahajjud secretly and people begin talking about their performance of

Tahajjud, and the light of Tahajjud or any other good deed shines on the person's face. This is witnessed day in day out. People refer to Sayyidunā Ghauš-e-Pāk and Khuwājāh Ajmayrī رَحِمَهُمَا اللَّهُ تَعَالَى as saints because Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is making them famous as such, and this is what this Ḥadīṣ means.

(*Mirāt-ul-Manājīh*, vol. 7, pp. 145)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Example of a sincere Muslim

The Holy Quran gives the following example of a sincere Muslim:

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَتَشْبِيتًا مِّنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ
كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ أَصَابَهَا وَابِلٌ فَآتَتْ أُكُلَهَا ضِعْفَيْنِ ۖ فَإِن لَّمْ يُصِبْهَا
وَابِلٌ فَطَلٌّ ۖ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٦٥﴾

And the example of those who spend their wealth in order to seek Allah's pleasure and for strengthening their heart is like garden on an elevated ground – heavy rain fell on it, so bringing forth its fruit twofold; so if hard rain does not reach it, the dew is enough; and Allah is seeing your deeds.

[*Kanz-ul-Īmān (Translation of Quran)*] (Part 3, Sūrah Al-Baqarah, verse 265)

In his *Tafsīr Khazāin-ul-'Irfān* Ṣadr-ul-Afāḍil Sayyidunā Maulānā Na'imuddīn Murādābādī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْهَادِي commented on this verse saying: This is an example of a sincere Muslim's deeds. The way a garden situated on good land and a high place blossoms well in any

case regardless of whether there is little or heavy rain, similarly regardless of whether a sincere Muslim's donations are many or few, Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ increases them, and He عَزَّوَجَلَّ knows your intention and sincerity. (*Khazā'in-ul-'Irfān*, pp. 81)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Who is sincere?

When is a man sincere? Here are a few quotes of some saints رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى regarding this matter:

1. Sayyidunā Yaḥyā Bin Mu'āz رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى was asked, 'When does a man become sincere?' He رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى replied, 'When his habits are like an infant; complimenting an infant does not make it happy and insulting it does not offend it. Just as it does not bother about compliments or insults, similarly when a man becomes like this then he can be called sincere.'
(*Akhlāq-uṣ-Ṣāliḥīn*, published by Maktaba-tul-Madīnah, Karachi)
2. A person asked Sayyidunā Ḍunnūn Miṣrī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْقَوِي, 'When should a man consider himself sincere?' He رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى answered, 'When he exerts his total efforts in doing good deeds but desires not to be respected.'
(*Tanbīh-ul-Mughtarrīn*, pp. 23)
3. A pious person was asked, 'Who is a sincere person?' He answered, 'A sincere man is one who hides his good deeds like his sins.'
4. Another pious person رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى was asked, 'What is the limit of sincerity?' He رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى answered, 'That you do not desire public praise.'
(*Az-Zawājir*, vol. 1, pp. 90)

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Yaksān ḥo madḥ-o-ẓam mujḥ pay ker do karam

Na khushī ḥo na gham Tājdār-e-Ḥaram

May praise and condemnation be equal to me, have mercy on me

May I never feel joy or sadness O King of Madīnah

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

The pleasure of Allah ﷺ is the greatest of all blessings

Sayyidunā Abū Saʿīd Khudrī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ reported this saying of the Beloved and Blessed Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ: Certainly Allah ﷻ will say to the dwellers of Paradise, ‘O residents of Paradise!’ They will respond, ‘O our Lord ﷻ we are present and all goodness comes from You.’ Allah ﷻ will ask, ‘Are you happy?’ They will reply, ‘O our Lord ﷻ! Why would we not be happy for You have granted to us what You did not grant to any of Your other creations.’ Allah ﷻ will reply, ‘Shall I not grant you a greater blessing than this?’ They will ask, ‘What greater blessing is there than this?’ Allah ﷻ will say, ‘I grant you my pleasure, so from today I will never be displeased with you.’ (*Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, vol. 3, pp. 260, Ḥadīṣ 6539*)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Fifth cure

Guard your intentions

The Prophet of Raḥmah, the Intercessor of Ummah, the Owner of Jannah صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, ‘Actions depend on intentions, and every man will get whatever he intends.’

(*Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, Kitāb-ul-Īmān, pp. 7, Ḥadīṣ 54*)

Showing Off

Sayyidunā Abū Mūsā Ash'arī رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ reported that the Prophet of Raḥmah, the Intercessor of Ummah صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ was asked, 'One man fights to demonstrate courage, another to demonstrate patriotism, and a third to show off – which of them is fighting in the path of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ?' He صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ answered, 'The one who fights for the only reason that the Kalimah (word) of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is elevated is a warrior in the path of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.'

(*Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, Kitāb-ul-Jihad, vol. 2, 4, pp. 256, 561, Ḥadiṣ 2810, 7458*)

From this Ḥadiṣ we learn that sincerity and the pleasure of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is a condition for the acquisition of any reward for any good deed.

(*Fuyūḍ-ul-Barī, vol. 11, 12, pp. 194*)

What is intention?

The literal definition of intention is, 'A firm determination of the heart', and in terms of Shari'ah it is, 'An intention of worship'.

(*Derived from: Nuzḥat-ul-Qārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, vol. 1, pp. 226*)

More intentions, more rewards

Dear Islamic brothers! The more intentions there are in a deed the more reward there is. For example, whilst helping a needy relative if your intention is only to please Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ then you will be rewarded for one intention and if you also intend to treat relative with kindness then you will be rewarded for two intentions.

(*Ashi'a-tul-Lam'āt, vol. 1, pp. 36*)

Likewise, walking to a Masjid to offer Ṣalāh is also a deed and can include many intentions. In *Fatāwā Razawiyyah* volume 5, page 673, Imām-e-Aḥl-e-Sunnat Ash-Shāḥ Imām Aḥmad Razā Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ الرَّحْمَنِ mentioned forty intentions for this and said, 'Certainly,

the one who has knowledge of intentions can accumulate rewards of many virtues by a single deed.’ (*Fatāwā Razawiyyah*, vol. 5, pp. 673)

In fact you can gain reward by making good intentions in permissible actions as well. For example when applying fragrance if your intention is to follow a Sunnah, respect the Masjid, freshen your mind and remove unpleasant odours from your Islamic brothers then you will be rewarded separately for each intention.

(*Ashi’a-tul-Lam’āt*, vol. 1, pp. 37)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Before donating think about your intention

Sayyidunā Ḥasan Baṣrī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْقَوِي said, ‘If any of the Islamic saints wanted to give charity he would focus and ponder first. If his intention was to please Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, then he would give it.’

(*Iḥyā-ul-‘Ulūm*, vol. 5, pp. 133)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Make good intentions before every deed

Dear Islamic brothers! Certainly making a good intention is a deed which is very light in terms of effort but in terms of reward and recompense it is huge. Therefore before doing any good deed we should make good intentions, even eating, drinking, dressing, sleeping, and marrying, good intentions should be made. For example, eat with the intention of developing the energy to worship Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. When dressing, intend to conceal your private parts that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has commanded you to conceal and to express Allah’s favour upon

you. Your intention in sleeping could be to gain assistance in fulfilling your duties to Allah ﷺ. In marriage your intention could be to safeguard your chastity and save yourself from sin.

For guidance regarding good intentions please listen to Amīr-e-Ahl-e-Sunnat's Sunnah-inspiring cassette speech 'The fruits of intention' and obtain his intention-card or pamphlet from any branch of Maktaba-tul-Madinah.

7 Merits of good intentions

1. Saying of the Beloved Mustafa ﷺ, 'A Muslim's intention is better than his action.'
(*Al-Mu'jam-ul-Kabīr liṭ-Ṭabarānī*, vol. 6, pp. 185, Ḥadīṣ 5942)
2. The Beloved Prophet ﷺ said, 'A true intention is the best deed.'
(*Jāmi'-ul-Aḥādīṣ*, vol. 2, pp. 19, Ḥadīṣ 3554)
3. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, 'A good intention leads a man to paradise.'
(*Kanz-ul-'Ummāl, Kitāb-ul-Akhlāq*, vol. 3, pp. 169, Ḥadīṣ 7245)
4. The Holiest Prophet ﷺ said, 'Allah ﷻ grants worldly blessings in exchange for the intention of the afterlife but He ﷻ refuses to grant blessings of the afterlife in exchange for a worldly intention.'
(*Kanz-ul-'Ummāl, Kitāb-ul-Akhlāq*, vol. 3, pp. 75, Ḥadīṣ 6053)
5. The Noblest Prophet ﷺ said, 'A good intention clings to the throne of Allah ﷻ, whenever a man proves his intention right (by acting upon it) the throne begins to move and then he is forgiven.'
(*Tārīkh-e-Baghdad*, vol. 12, pp. 444, Ḥadīṣ 6926)

6. Sayyidunā Abū Ḥurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ reported this saying of the Revered and Renowned Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, ‘Whoever intended to do a good deed and then could not carry it out, will have one good deed recorded for him.’ (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, pp. 79, Ḥadīṣ 130)
7. Sayyidunā ‘Umar Bin Khaṭṭāb رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ said, ‘The best of deeds is the fulfilment of the Farḍ, abstaining from things prohibited by Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and correcting your intentions in the court of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.’ (Iṭḥāf-us-Sādāt-il-Muttaqīn, vol. 13, pp. 19)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Reward according to intention

Sayyidunā Abū Kabshah Anṣārī رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ heard the Holy Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying, ‘There are four types of people: The first is a man to whom Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ granted wealth and knowledge and he practices abstinence, treats relatives well and knows the rights of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. He is in the best rank and stage. The second is a man to whom Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ granted knowledge but he has no wealth. His intention is good and he says, if I had wealth I would act like so and so. This man is with his intention, and both these men are equal in reward. The third is a man to whom Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ granted wealth but not knowledge. He spends his wealth without knowledge. He is not pious, does not treat his relatives well and does not recognise the rights of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ in His blessing. This is the worst type. The fourth is a man to whom Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has not granted wealth or knowledge, he says, if I had wealth I would act like so and so (the third person). He is with his intention, and both these men are equal in sin.’

(Jāmi’-ut-Tirmizī, Kitāb-uz-Zuhd, vol. 4, pp. 146, Ḥadīṣ 2332)

Dear Islamic brothers! Did you see! Due to good intention a man obtains the reward for giving charity without giving any, and another commits a Ḥarām act without spending any money. The difference is due to their good and bad intentions.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Being beaten is easier than making good intentions

Sayyidunā Nu’aym Bin Ḥammād عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْوَهَّاب used to say, ‘For our backs to be hit with whips is easier for us than making a good intention.’ (*Tanbīh-ul-Mughtarrīn*, pp. 25)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Reward for holy war

Sayyidunā Anas Bin Mālīk رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ said: When we returned from the battle of Tabūk the Beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, ‘Certainly, we left behind in Madīnah Munawwarah such people who were with us in the mountains and valley that we walked through but they remained behind for a ‘Uẓr (valid reason).’

(*Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, Kitāb-ul-Jihad, vol. 2, pp. 265, Ḥadīṣ 2839*)

Ḥakīm-ul-Ummat Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ الْعَمَلَان commented on this Ḥadīṣ: There were various Muslim tribes that desired to participate in this holy war but were unable to go due to any severe helplessness. (They were with you) In a way that their bodies were in Madīnah but their hearts were with you in war, i.e. their intentions were with you, or their reward was with you because in your absence they looked after your homes and served your families, so they were

with you in the actual reward, even though you exceeded them in physical war, that is why they will not get a share of the war spoils. We learn that a good intention is very valuable. Also, feeling sad on missing an opportunity to do a good deed is also a good deed.

(*Mirāt-ul-Manājīh*, vol. 5, pp. 429, 430)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Sincerity in an intention

Sayyidunā Mālik Bin Dīnār رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ resided in Damascus and used to perform I'tikāf in the Masjid prepared by Sayyidunā Amīr Mu'āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ. Once he رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ thought to himself, 'I wish I could be an administrator of this Masjid.' So he رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ extended his I'tikāf and offered so many Ṣalāḥs that he رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ was always seen busy in offering Ṣalāḥ, but no one noticed him. A year passed by. One day he رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ stepped outside the Masjid and heard a voice from the unseen source, 'O Mālik! Now you should repent.' After hearing this he رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ felt immense grief and shame for his past year's selfish worships, he رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ emptied his heart from showing off and worshipped with sincere intention throughout the entire night.

In the morning a crowd of people gathered outside the Masjid and said amongst themselves, 'The Masjid affairs are unorganised therefore we should make this man the administrator and hand him administration of the Masjid matters.' The whole crowd agreed and approached him, after he رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ finished his Ṣalāḥ they said, 'By a decision mutually agreed and made, we want to make you the administrator of our Masjid.' He رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ implored to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, 'O Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! I worshipped pretentiously for one year in order to

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gain administration of over this Masjid, but I did not succeed. Now that I have busied myself in worshipping You with sincerity, a crowd of people has come to make me administrator of it and place this burden upon me, but I swear by Your Glory that now I will not accept this responsibility and nor will I exit the Masjid.’ After saying this he رَحِمَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ again engaged in worship.

(Taḏkira-tul-Awliyā, chapter 4, vol. 1, pp. 48-49)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Make intentions for good deeds

It is said that a student asked some scholars, ‘Inform me of a deed by which I can continuously gain spiritual reward, because I dislike for there to be a moment in the day or night when I am not doing a good deed.’ They replied, ‘Do as many good deeds as possible, and when you get tired then make intentions for good deeds because he who intends to do a good deed is like he who does it.’

(Iḥyā-ul-‘Ulūm, chapter 1, vol. 5, pp. 89)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Sixth cure

Save yourself from satanic whispers during worship

Dear Islamic brothers! Sincerity is the key for acceptance, therefore, just as it is important to have sincerity in your heart prior to doing a good deed it is also necessary to maintain sincerity during it as well, because Satan persistently attempts to whisper in our hearts. Sayyidunā Fuḍayl Bin ‘Iyāḍ عَلَيْهِ رَحِمَهُ اللهُ الرَّزَّاق used to say: Anyone who

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is not smarter than a magician regarding his deeds will definitely become a victim of showing off. (*Tanbīh-ul-Mughtarrīn*, pp. 23)

In order to save yourself from satanic whispers during worship, three things are necessary: (1) Recognising the whisper (2) disliking it (3) refusing to accept it.

For example, if somebody began to offer Ṣalāt-ut-Taḥajjud with good intentions, and during Ṣalāḥ Satan tempts him to show off by whispering in his heart, ‘When people realise that I offer Taḥajjud they will think highly of me’, now it is vital for this person to instantly recognise that this is a satanic whisper, then he should also despise it and believe that attempting to impress the creation using worship which should be performed solely for the Creator عَزَّوَجَلَّ is equivalent to inviting the wrath of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, then he should ignore the satanic whisper.

Dear Islamic brothers! Even though this is a very difficult thing to do but it is not impossible. In the beginning this seems to be extremely tough but after forcing yourself to attempt it patiently for some time then by the mercy, grace and benevolence of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, this task will become simpler for you. Our job is to make the effort, Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is the Giver of success. Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

*And those who struggled in Our path – We shall surely show them
Our paths; and indeed Allah is with the righteous ones.*

[*Kanz-ul-Īmān (Translation of Quran)*] (Sūrah Al-‘Ankabūt, verse 69)

If satanic whispers still remain despite trying?

Despite our resentment, if our Nafs still follows the path of Satan then we can hope in the mercy of Allah ﷻ that the sin of showing off will not be written in our record of deeds.

Hujjat-ul-Islam Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad Ghazālī عليه رَحْمَةُ اللهِ الْوَائِي wrote in *Ihyā-ul-‘Ulūm*: Know that Allah ﷻ only burdens humans within their capacity, and it is not within human capacity to stop Satan from whispering in our hearts or to form a nature that is not tempted by desires. All humans can do is confront these temptations with resentment formed by knowledge of their consequences, religious knowledge, and faith in Allah ﷻ and the afterlife. When a person completes this then he has exerted his maximum effort in this matter and this is all that he is commanded to do.

There are Prophetic statements on this issue, the blessed companions صلى الله تعالى عليهما وآلهما وسلم asked the Greatest and Holiest Prophet صلى الله تعالى عليهما وآلهما وسلم whilst complaining, ‘We have some thoughts in our hearts that if we were to fall from the sky and be swooped away by birds or be blown from one place to another by the wind, we would prefer it to mentioning those thoughts on our tongues.’ The Prophet of Raḥmah, the Intercessor of Ummah صلى الله تعالى عليهما وآلهما وسلم asked, ‘Do you dislike these thoughts?’ They answered, ‘Yes.’ He صلى الله تعالى عليهما وآلهما وسلم responded, ‘This is clear faith.’ (*Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Kitāb-ul-Akhḫāq, vol. 4, pp. 425, Ḥadīṣ 5111*)

Their hearts contained whispers and dislike for them, and we cannot say that by (clear faith) he meant the actual whispers, now there is only one thing remaining that he must have meant the dislike of those whispers which was there side by side with whispers. Even though showing off is a major sin but it is less than satanic whispers in the court of Allah ﷻ, so when dislike gets rid of a more major

sin then it must also save a man from the harm of showing off to a greater extent. (*Iḥyā-ul-‘Ulūm, vol. 3, pp. 385*)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Seventh cure

Act equally whether in private or public

Sayyidunā Abū Ḥurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ reported that the Beloved and Blessed Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, ‘When a man offers a good Ṣalāh in public and a good Ṣalāh in private then Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ says, this is My true bondman.’

(*Sunan Ibn Mājah, Kitāb-uz-Zuhd, vol. 4, pp. 468, Ḥadīṣ 4200*)

Ḥakīm-ul-Ummat Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ الْعَمَّان commented on this Ḥadīṣ saying: i.e. this man is not a show off, rather he is sincere. If he was a show off then he would offer a good Ṣalāh in public but to a lesser standard in solitude. Since he offers Ṣalāh well even in solitude, he is sincere. (*Mirāt-ul-Manājīḥ, vol. 7, pp. 140*)

Dear Islamic brothers! Whether we are alone or amongst Islamic brothers we must make our best efforts to worship equally in both situations. For example, we must demonstrate the same humility and fear in Ṣalāh when alone that we display when we are in public and whatever deed we hesitate to do in public, we should refrain from it in private as well. The Noblest Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, ‘Whatever you dislike to do in front of people, do not do it when alone either.’ (*Al-Jāmi‘-uṣ-Ṣaghīr, letter Mīm, vol. 2, pp. 487, Ḥadīṣ. 7973*)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Eighth cure

Hide your good deeds

Dear Islamic brothers! We should try as much as possible to conceal our good deeds the same way we conceal our sins, and suffice with knowing that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is aware of them. Especially after doing a private good deed we should guard our Nafs because it may be that our Nafs desires to reveal this deed and say, 'If people find out about this great deed that you have done then they might be encouraged to do it as well. Why are you content with concealing it? This way people will not realise your status and they will reject your greatness and miss an opportunity to follow you. How will you be a leader for people? How will call towards righteousness be common?' etc. In this situation we should pray to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ for steadfastness, and instead of thinking about your big deed think of the huge kingdom of the afterlife, meaning the everlasting blessings of Paradise. Any person who seeks reward from other people for worshipping Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is subject to the wrath of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and it is also possible that if a man reveals his deed in front of other people he might become admirable in their eyes but disgraced in the court of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, and thus my deed will be ruined. We should address our Nafs saying, 'Why should I sell my deed to people in exchange for their praise, when they are unable to do anything for themselves? They cannot give me sustenance nor do they control life or death.'

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

The strongest creation

Sayyidunā Anas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ reported this saying of the Revered and Renowned Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ: When Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ created the

earth it began to tremble. Then Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ created the mountains and made them nails for the earth. The angels began to talk among themselves, ‘May be Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ has not created anything stronger than mountains.’ Then Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ created iron which pierced mountains, then fire which melted the iron, then He عَزَّوَجَلَّ ordered water which extinguished the fire, and then He عَزَّوَجَلَّ commanded the wind which muddied the water. Now the angels had a dispute about what the strongest creation of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ was, so they asked Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. He عَزَّوَجَلَّ replied, ‘I have not created anything stronger than a human heart when he donates with his right hand without his left hand knowing. He is the strongest of my creation.’

(Jāmi’-ut-Tirmizī, Kitāb-ut-Tafsīr, vol. 5, pp. 242, Ḥadīṣ 3380 – summarized)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Secret deeds are better

The Beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, ‘A secret deed is seventy times better than a public one.’

(Kanz-ul-‘Ummāl, Kitāb-ul-Aẓkār, vol. 1, pp. 227, Ḥadīṣ 1925 – summarized)

The statement of Sayyidunā ‘Īsā

Sayyidunā ‘Īsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام said, ‘Whenever one of you fasts, you should apply oil to your head, beard and lips so that people do not realise that you are fasting, and donate with your right hand without your left knowing, and when you offer Ṣalāh, lower the curtain over your door, and Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ distributes praise just as He عَزَّوَجَلَّ distributes sustenance.’ (Iḥyā-ul-‘Ulūm, vol. 3, pp. 361)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Sayings of saints

1. Sayyidunā Sufyān Ṣaurī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْقَوِي said, ‘Whatever public deeds I did I consider them undone, because when people are watching it is not within the ability of people like us to remain sincere.’ (*Tanbīh-ul-Mughtarrīn*, pp. 26)
2. Sayyidunā Bishr Ḥāfi عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْكَافِي used to say, ‘It is inappropriate for people like us to reveal even some of our sincere deeds, so then what will be the situation of those deeds in which there is clear showing off?! Therefore, it is better for people such as ourselves to conceal our deeds.’ (*Tanbīh-ul-Mughtarrīn*, pp. 29)
3. Sayyidunā Fuḍayl Bin ‘Iyād عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْوَدَّاع used to say, ‘The best deed and knowledge is that which is concealed from the people.’ (*Tanbīh-ul-Mughtarrīn*, pp.29)
4. Sayyidunā Ḥasan Baṣrī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْقَوِي said, ‘I accompanied some people who had such wisdom in their hearts that if they brought it to their tongues it would benefit them and their companions as well, but they refrained from mentioning it due to fear of fame. If one of them saw an obstruction in a path, he would not remove it simply out of fear of becoming well-known.’

(*Iḥyā-ul-‘Ulūm*, vol. 3, pp. 364)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Parable

Ḥujjat-ul-Islam Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad Ghazālī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْوَائِي wrote: There was a time when the remembrance of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and Quranic recitation could be heard in every street of Basra and this encouraged people to do Ṣikr and recite the Holy Quran. Coincidentally

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a scholar wrote a booklet about the subtle matters of showing off, and as a result (when the book was published) everyone stopped doing Żikr and reciting the Holy Quran loudly. Many people said, ‘If only that scholar had not written that booklet.’

(Kīmiyā-e-Sa’ādat, vol. 2, pp. 692)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Do not ask about fasting

Sayyidunā Ibrāhīm Bin Adḥam عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْأَكْرَمِ used to say, ‘Do not ask your [Muslim] brother about his fast, because if he says, ‘I am fasting’, this will please his Nafs, and if he says, ‘I am not fasting’, this will sadden his Nafs, and both are signs of showing off.

(Tanbīh-ul-Mughtarrīn, pp.24)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

A fasting person should answer if he is questioned

Sayyidunā Abū Ḥurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ reported this saying of the Holy Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, ‘Whenever someone is given an invitation to a meal he should accept it and if he is fasting, he should pray for the one inviting him.’

(Jāmi’-ut-Tirmizī, Kitāb-uṣ-Ṣawm, vol. 2, pp. 203, Raqm 780)

A narration of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* states: Whenever anyone is invited to a meal and he is fasting he should say, ‘I am fasting’.

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb-uṣ-Ṣawm, pp. 579, Ḥadīṣ. 1150)

Muftī Aḥmad Yār Khān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ الْمَلَأَن comment on this Ḥadīṣ saying: He should not accept the invitation at all, or he should accept it and

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arrive at the location but not eat anything and mention his reason. Remember, it is better to hide a voluntary fast but in this situation hiding it will cause hostility in the host's heart or make him sad, and since making the heart of a Muslim happy is also worship, therefore he is advised to reveal his fast.' (*Mirāt-ul-Manājīh*, vol. 3, pp. 198)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

The worst show off

Sayyidunā Fuḍayl Bin 'Iyāḍ عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الرَّزَّاقِ used to say, 'We found previous people accustomed to showing off in deeds that they actually used to do, but today people show off in deeds that they do not even do.' (*Tanbīh-ul-Mughtarrīn*, pp. 25)

I.e. people in the past used to do good deeds in order to impress other people but these days people do not even do good deeds, rather they act as though they are doing good deeds in order to give other people the impression that they are doing them. These are worse than the first kind of show offs.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Ninth cure

Adopt good company

The Beloved and Blessed Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, 'An example of a good and bad companion is like that of a perfume-carrier and a blacksmith. The perfume-carrier will either give you a gift or you will buy something from him or you will catch a pleasant fragrance

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from him. On the other hand, a blacksmith will either burn your clothes or you will catch an unpleasant odour from him.’

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, pp. 1116, Ḥadīṣ 2628)

*A good man's company is like a perfume-shop my friends
Even if you do not buy anything you will catch thousands of fragrant smells
A bad man's company is like a blacksmith's shop
No matter how much you try to scrunch your clothes, thousands of sparks
will stain them*

Dear Islamic brothers! Undoubtedly every company has its effect. For example if you meet an Islamic brother whose eyes are moist, his face his covered by a cloud of sadness, and grief comes from his voice due to a loved one's death, then seeing him like this will also make you sad for a few moments. On the other hand if you happen to sit with an Islamic brother whose face is blossoming, he has a big smile on his face, and happiness is shining from his voice due to some success that he has experienced, then you will also voluntarily or involuntarily share his happiness for some time.

In exactly the same way, if someone accompanies people who are totally heedless of the afterlife and audaciously commit sins, then it is likely that he will very soon become just like them. On the other hand if someone accompanies people whose hearts are full of love for Madīnah and who are striving day and night for success in the afterlife, whose eyes cry due to the fear of Allah ﷻ then these emotions will definitely transfer to his heart as well, إِنَّ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

The Madanī environment of Dawat-e-Islami

Dear Islamic brothers! You do not have to worry at all to find such Madanī company. **اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ**! By the blessings of being part of Dawat-e-Islami a global & non-political movement for preaching the Holy Quran and sacred Sunnah, the best moral qualities will subconsciously become a part of your personality. Every Islamic brother should attend his local Sunnah-inspiring weekly congregation of Dawat-e-Islami and travel in Madanī Qāfilaḥs with devotees of Rasūl. By the blessing of travelling in these Madanī Qāfilaḥs **اِنْ شَاءَ اللّٰهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ** you will get an opportunity to reflect upon your past life and your heart will start pondering about building a good afterlife which will result in feeling regretful for sins, and repenting sincerely.

As a result of travelling regularly in Madanī Qāfilaḥs your tongue will replace filthy and useless talk with Ṣalāt-‘Alan-Nabī, Quranic recitation, praise for Allah **عَزَّوَجَلَّ** and Na’at. You will replace your anger with softness, your impatience with patience, you will lose your arrogance and gain a desire to respect Muslims, and you will save yourself from the greed of worldly fortune and find a desire to do good deeds. In conclusion, **اِنْ شَاءَ اللّٰهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ** regular travels in the path of Allah will result in a Madanī revolution in your life. Islamic sisters should also regularly attend their weekly Sunnah-inspiring congregations.

By the grace of Allah **عَزَّوَجَلَّ I changed**

Dear Islamic brothers! The following is a statement by an Islamic brother of Shalimar Town (Markaz-ul-Awliyā Lahore): I was extremely sinful, as well as being addicted to films and dramas. I used to flirt with young girls and hang around with indecent friends. I used to

wander about with them till very late at night. Due to my bad habits, even my relatives were afraid of me and would dread any occasions of me visiting them. They even made sure that their children stayed away from me. My dark sinful evening converted into a blossoming morning the day I met a devotee of Rasūl from Dawat-e-Islami who very politely encouraged me to travel in a Madanī Qāfilāh making individual efforts on me. His words touched me and I eventually did travel in a Madanī Qāfilāh.

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ! The company of devotees of Rasūl in the Madanī Qāfilāh created a Madanī revolution in the heart of this sinner and criminal. I found the gift of repentance and a desire to dress in Sunnah Madanī clothing, I began to wear a green turban (‘Imāmah) and this sinner and habitual gossip began to preach the Sunnah. Today by the grace of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, I am embraced by the same relatives that once disliked me. I used to be the worst in my family, but by the mercy of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ due to the blessing of Madanī Qāfilāhs now I am everyone’s favourite.

(Faizān-e-Sunnat, chapter: Blessings of Ramadan, vol. 1, pp. 655)

Jab tak bikay na thay koi pūchṭā na thā

Tū nay kharīd ker mujhay anmol ker diyā

Until I was sold no one cared about me

You bought me and made me priceless

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Madanī In’āmāt

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ! Shaykh-e-Ṭarīqat, Amīr-e-Ahl-e-Sunnat, the founder of Dawat-e-Islami, ‘Allāmah Maulānā Abu Bilal Muhammad Ilyas

Attar Qadiri Razavi **داعی بزرگائے عالمیہ** has created ‘Madanī In’āmāt’ which are a combination of Sharī’ah and Ṭarīqah in the form of questions, the purpose of which is to help Muslims carry out good deeds and avoid sins easily in these troublesome times. There are 72 Madanī In’āmāt for Islamic brothers, 63 for Islamic sisters, 92 for male students, 83 for female students, 40 for small Madanī boys and girls, and 27 for special Islamic brothers.

Countless Islamic brothers and Islamic sisters and students practice Madanī In’āmāt, and every night before going to sleep they do ‘Fikr-e-Madīnah’ and assess their deeds whilst filling the boxes in their pocket-sized Madanī In’āmāt booklets. By the grace of Allah **عَزَّوَجَلَّ**, after practicing these Madanī In’āmāt the obstructions in becoming pious and avoiding sins will disappear gradually and you will develop the mind frame to practice the Sunnah, have hatred for sins and ponder about the safety of your faith.

In order to become Muslims of strong character we should obtain a Madanī In’āmāt booklet from any branch of Maktaba-ul-Madīnah and regularly do Fikr-e-Madīnah (self-assessment) every day by filling in the boxes, and make a habit to hand over the card on the first day of every Madanī (lunar) month to our local Madanī In’āmāt responsible brother.

Great news for those who practice Madanī In’āmāt

Dear Islamic brothers! Muslims who practice Madanī In’āmāt are very fortunate, and this can be understood from the following Madanī parable. An Islamic brother from Hyderabad (Bāb-ul-Islam Sindh) gave the following statement under oath: One night in the month of Rajab-ul-Murajjab 1426 A.H. I was hugely blessed with a vision of the Prophet of mankind, the Peace of our heart and mind, the most

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Generous and Kind صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ in a dream. His sacred lips moved and flowers of mercy began to blossom, he صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, ‘Whoever does Fikr-e-Madīnāh about Madanī In’āmāt every day this month Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ will forgive him.’

(Faizān-e-Sunnat, chapter: Blessings of Ramadan, vol. 1, pp. 682)

*Madanī In’āmāt kī bhī marḥabā kyā bāt ḥay
Qurb-e-Ḥaq kay tālibaun kay wāsiṭay sawghāt ḥay*

*Marḥabā how great are Madanī In’āmāt
They are a gift for seekers of Allah’s proximity*

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Tenth cure

Make a habit of recitations (Awṛād-o-Waṣāif)

Dear Islamic brothers! In order to avoid showing off, as well as previous acts, also use spiritual cures, such as:

1. Whenever the thought of showing off enters your heart recite ‘أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ’ once and then spit (without producing saliva) towards your left shoulder three times.
2. Whoever recites ‘أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ’ ten times every day, Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ appoints an angel to protect him from Satan.
(Musnad Abī Ya’lā, vol. 3, pp. 400, Ḥadīṣ 4100 – summarized)
3. Anyone who recites Sūrah Al-Ikhlāṣ 11 times in the morning (from the middle of the night to the glimmering of the first ray

of sunlight) then even if Satan accompanied by his army tries to make him sin he will fail, unless the man himself sins.

(*Al-Wazīfa-tul-Karīmah*, pp.18)

4. Reciting Sūrah An-Nās also drives away satanic whispers.
5. Whoever recites ‘لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ’ 21 times in the morning and evening and blows on some water and drinks it then إِنَّ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ he will be safe from satanic whispers to a great extent. (*Mirāt-ul-Manājīh*, vol. 1, pp. 87)
6. Reciting ‘هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ ۗ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ’¹ instantly drives away satanic whisper.

7. Reciting

سُبْحَنَ الْمَلِكِ الْخَلَّاقِ

﴿إِنْ يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ﴾ وَمَا ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ بِعَزِيزٍ ﴿٢٠﴾²

excessively eliminates satanic whispers from their root.

(*Fatāwā Razawiyyah* - referenced, vol. 1, pp. 770)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

What if the problem remains despite treatment?

Dear Islamic brothers! In spite of our best efforts if the problem remains then we should do not be afraid, rather we should continue

¹ Part 27, Sūrah Al-Ḥadīd, verse 3

² Part 13, Sūrah Ibrāhīm, verse 19, 20

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our treatment because ‘one day the heart will be satisfied’. Because if we stop treating ourselves then it is as though we have totally handed ourselves over to Satan and then he will completely demolish us. Therefore we should continue struggling to save ourselves from showing off.

Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad Ghazālī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْوَالِي (passed away in 505 AH) wrote explaining it to people like us: If you feel that Satan does not get off your back in spite of asking Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ for help then and he persistently tries to defeat you then this means that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ wants to test your perseverance, strength and patience, meaning He عَزَّوَجَلَّ is testing you as to whether you fight and battle Satan or be conquered by him. (*Minhāj-ul-‘Ābidīn*, pp. 46 – summarized)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ



CONCLUSION

Dear Islamic brothers! From everything that we have studied up to now we can conclude we have learned:

- ❖ Showing off is definitely an evil trait and extremely severe inner disease.
- ❖ It is Ḥarām and leads to Hell.
- ❖ The Holy Quran and Aḥādīṣ strictly condemn it.
- ❖ Show offs shall be thrown into a valley of Hell that even Hell itself seeks protection from.

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- ❖ To educate ourselves about showing off and its cure, falls under Farḍ knowledge.
- ❖ The definition of showing off is *‘to worship with an intention or desire to please other than Allah’*.
- ❖ It is not permissible to judge another person as being a show off because this is a matter of the heart.
- ❖ Showing off can occur via the tongue and sometimes by action.
- ❖ There are three things in which it is possible to show off: (1) Faith (2) Worldly affairs (3) Worships.
- ❖ There are two ways in which a person can show off in acts of worship: (1) In the actual performance (2) In its quality. Further, showing off in acts of worship can be pure or mixed.
- ❖ We should safeguard our intentions before, during and after our acts of worship.
- ❖ Revealing our good deeds can sometimes be permissible but to hide them is better.
- ❖ One type of showing off is Riyā-e-Khafī (hidden showing off) which is extremely hard to avoid except for whoever Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ favours.
- ❖ If someone is complimented for doing a good deed then for him to feel joy is a natural thing, but remember there are possibilities for enjoying a compliment – sometimes it is commendable and sometimes not.
- ❖ It is also possible to show off whilst avoiding a sin because refraining from a sin is also a good deed.

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- ❖ It is unwise to refrain from doing a good deed due to fear of showing off because by doing this we will lose out on two things; reward of sincerity and the good deed.
- ❖ Merely thinking about showing off and inclining towards it is not damaging because Satan is with every human. It is not within human capability to totally prevent satanic whispers from entering the heart.
- ❖ There are three signs of a show off: (1) He is lazy in worship when alone but energetic in public. (2) If he is complimented he increases his deed but (3) if he is criticised he decreases it.
- ❖ If any of these symptoms exists in us we should repent as soon as possible and start immediate attempts to be sincere lest we should die before repenting and have to face the consequences of showing off in the next world.
- ❖ Getting rid of showing off is definitely very difficult but not impossible.
- ❖ The following ten treatments are very beneficial to cure yourself from the disease of showing off: 1st cure – Ask Allah ﷻ for help. 2nd cure – Ponder about the harms of showing off. 3rd cure – Eliminate the causes of showing off. 4th cure – Be sincere. 5th cure – Protect your intention. 6th cure – Save yourself from satanic whispers during worship. 7th cure – Act equally in private and public. 8th cure – Hide your good deeds. 9th cure – Adopt good company. 10th cure – Make a routine of spiritual recitations (Awrād-o-Wazāif).
- ❖ In order to remember all the details, read this book again.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ
أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

21 Parables

1. Result of sincerity

The Greatest and Holiest Prophet ﷺ said: In a previous era, three men were travelling somewhere and had to spend the night in a cave. When they entered the cave, a rock slid from the mountain and blocked the cave entrance. They mutually agreed that the only way to make the rock move out of the way was for each of them to pray to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ for the sake of any good deeds that they had done. One of them said, 'O Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! My parents were old, but I did not give my children and servants milk before serving my parents first. One day I ended up wandering very far in search for wood. When I returned I found that my parents had fallen asleep. I brought some milk for them but felt it was inappropriate to awake them and I did not either want to give milk to my family before my parents. My children cried at my feet but I spent the entire night standing with the milk bowl in my hand, until the morning. Then my parents drank the milk. O Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! If I did this deed for Your pleasure then remove this trouble of rock from us.' The rock slid slightly, but not enough for them to exit.

The second of them said, 'O Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! I was in love with my uncle's daughter. I expressed my evil desire to her but she refused. One day she came to me for help being victim of a famine. I gave her 100 gold

coins with the condition that she would be alone with me, to which she agreed. When we were alone she said, ‘Fear Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and do not commit this sin.’ On hearing this I abstained from the sin and also gave the money to her. O Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! If this deed of mine was solely for Your pleasure then remove this problem from us.’ The rock slid a bit more but still not enough for them to exit.

The third man said, ‘O Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ I employed some men for labour, and all of them except one took their wages. I invested his wage in business and made a lot of profit. Sometime later he came to me and demanded his wage. I responded, ‘These camels, cows, goats and servants that you see all belong to you.’ He said, ‘Are you joking with me?’ I replied, ‘No, I am not joking (rather it’s fact).’ On hearing this he took all his wealth and went away leaving nothing. O Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! If this deed of mine was solely for Your pleasure then please save us from this difficulty.’ As soon as he prayed the rock slid and they exited the cave. (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, pp. 1465, Ḥadīṣ 2743*)

Dear Islamic brothers! Did you see the blessings gained by three men trapped in a cave due to their sincere deeds?

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

2. I do not find my intention present

Sayyidunā ‘Alī Bin Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ said: Abdul Malik Bin Marwān sent a man to Madīnah Munawwarah رَاحَهُمُ اللَّهُ شَرَفًا وَتَعْظِيمًا making him the governor so that he could make its residents pledge allegiance and overlook its affairs. I went to Sayyidunā Sālim Bin ‘Abdullāh, Sayyidunā Qāsim Bin Muhammad and Sayyidunā Abū Salamah Bin ‘Abdur Raḥmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُمْ and said to them, ‘Let us all go to new governor of our city to meet him and build trust between ourselves.’

So we went to the governor and said Salām to him, he called us and asked, ‘Which one of you is Sa’īd Bin Musayyab (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ)?’ Sayyidunā Qāsim Bin Muhammad (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ) answered, ‘Sa’īd Bin Musayyab (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ) does not associate with the rulers. He spends his time in the Masjid. He spends all his time engaged in worshipping Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, and he is not interested in worldly figures, nor does he like going to the courts of the rulers.’ The governor replied, ‘You people convince him to come to me and make sure he (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ) comes. I swear by Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! If he does not come to me I will definitely kill him.’ Three times the governor swore and threatened that he would kill him.

Sayyidunā Qāsim (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ) said, ‘This tyrant governor’s threat troubled us deeply and we returned. I went straight to the Masjid to meet Sayyidunā Sa’īd Bin Musayyab (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ) who was sitting leaning against a pillar. I made him aware of the whole situation and suggested, ‘Your honour, I advise that you go to perform ‘Umrah and stay in Makkah Mukarramah for some days just to get away from this tyrant governor until the matter settles.’ He (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ) replied, ‘I do not find my intention present in this deed and in my opinion the best deed is that which is carried out with sincerity only for the pleasure of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.’ (*‘Uyūn-ul-Hikāyat, pp. 258*)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

3. Continuous fasting for forty years

Sayyidunā Dāwūd Ṭāī (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ) fasted for forty consecutive years but he was so sincere that even his households did not know about this fasting. When leaving for work he used to take his lunch with him and give it to someone on the way. Then he (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ) would

return after Maghrib and eat at home. (*Faizān-e-Sunnat*, vol. 1, pp. 861, with reference to *Ma'dan-e-Akhlāq*, part 1, pp. 182)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

4. The slave who hid his good deeds

A man bought a slave, and the slave said, ‘My master I have three conditions:

1. You will not prohibit me from performing my Farḍ Ṣalāḥs when their time arrives.
2. You can command me to do anything you want in the daytime but not at night.
3. Give me separate room in your house which no one apart from me can enter.

The master accepted the three conditions. Then he let the slave choose whichever room he wanted. The slave opted for a damaged and broken room. The master asked, ‘O slave why have you picked a damaged room?’ He replied, ‘My master! Do you not know that even a damaged room turns into a garden by the blessings of the Zikr (remembrance) of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ?’ So the slave would spend his days serving his master and his nights worshipping Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

Sometime later, one night whilst wandering around the house the master entered the slave’s room. He saw that the room was filled with light, and the slave was in prostration to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. There was a bright lantern on his head hanging between the sky and the earth, and he was humbly imploring Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, ‘O Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! You have made it compulsory for me to fulfil my master’s rights and serve

him in the daytime. If I did not have to do this I would spend all my days and nights only worshipping You, so please accept my excuse O my Lord عَزَّوَجَلَّ.' The master observed him till the morning, then the light disappeared and the roof returned to its state.

After witnessing this entire spectacle the master returned and told his wife about everything he saw. The next night he took his wife with him and stood at the slave's door. They saw their slave in prostration and the lantern above his head. They both stood witnessing this marvellous spectacle whilst crying. The next morning they called the slave and said, 'You are free for the sake of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, so that you no longer have that excuse and you can worship Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ with full attention.' When the slave heard this, he raised his head to the sky and said, 'O Keeper of secrets! My secret has been revealed. Now that my secret is not hidden anymore, I no longer wish to live.' Then the slave fell and his soul departed from its physical cage.

(Mukāshafa-tul-Qulūb, chapter 11, pp. 39)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

5. Forgiving for the sake of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ

Sayyidunā 'Umar Fārūq رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ once hit a man with his whip and then said, 'Take your revenge from me.' The man said, 'I have forgiven you for the sake of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and for your sake.' Sayyidunā 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ replied, 'This is nothing. Either forgive me for my sake so that it is a favour upon me, or only for the sake of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.' The man responded, 'I forgave you only for the sake of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ.' He رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ replied, 'Now this is correct.'

(Al-Hadīqa-tun-Nadiyyah, chapter 7, pp. 529)

Showing Off

Dear Islamic brothers! From this parable we have learned a Madanī lesson that every good deed must be purely for ‘the pleasure of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ’ and our intentions must not be mixed with satisfying ‘anyone else’ so that they can achieve acceptance in His court and be a provision for us in the afterlife.

Jis kā ‘amal hāy bay-gharz us kī jazā kuch aur hāy

Selfless people have unique rewards

6. Why did his Nafs dislike his mother’s instruction?

Sayyidunā Abū Muhammad Murta’ish رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ said, ‘I performed many Hajj and most of them without any travel provisions. Then I realised that they were all tainted with the desires of my Nafs, because once my mother instructed me to bring her some water in a bowl and my Nafs hesitated. I then realised that my Nafs only accompanied me in my pilgrimage for its personal desire and it betrayed me because if my Nafs was eliminated then why would it severely dislike to fulfil a Shar’ī right today?’ (*Ar-Risāla-tul-Qushayriyyah*, pp. 135)

Dear Islamic brothers! This teaches us that sometimes our Nafs acquires its desire in the disguise of piety, i.e. it happily gets ready to do any good deed in which it experiences joy and sees the fulfilment of its desire, but it hesitates to do any good deed which is unappealing.

O shahād numāye zahar dar jān

Gum jāun kidhār tayrī badī say

*Honey-like poisonous drinks
Where shall I lose myself in your evil*

(Ḥadāiq-e-Bakhshish)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

7. Why did I feel regret for not making it to the first row?

In *Kīmiyā-e-Sa'ādat* Sayyidunā Imām Muhammad Ghazālī عليه رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْوَالِي wrote: A saint said, 'I repeated 30 years Ṣalāḥs that I always offered in the first row of the Masjid. The reason for this was that one day I got late for congregational Ṣalāḥ due to some reason and so I offered in the last row, I felt ashamed of this and thought, 'What will people say? They will think that he is very late today!' It is then that I understood, 'This was all to show other people that they see me in the first row.' (So because all my Ṣalāḥs were ruined, I offered them all again.)' (*Kīmiyā-e-Sa'ādat*, vol. 2, pp. 876)

رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى! How great was the sincerity of our saints اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ! On the basis of just one 'thought of the heart' he رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ considered 30 years of Ṣalāḥs to be invalid and offered them again. On the other hand there are people like us who claim to be servants of such saints but firstly 'the field of our hearts' has no 'seed' of 'passion for worship' and even if we somehow manage to do worship we fail to water it with the 'water of sincerity'. In fact we ruin our 'crop of worship' with the 'poison of fame'.

Khā gayī sab naykiyaun ko khuwāish-e-nām-o-numūd

The desire for fame destroyed all my deeds

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

8. Seller of sincerity

Sayyidunā Mubārak Bin Fuḍālāḥ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ reported from Sayyidunā Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ: There was once a huge tree in some area that people worshipped and hence evil of polytheism and unbelief was spreading quickly amongst the people of that area. One day a Muslim

passed by the tree and became infuriated to see people worshipping someone other than Allah. Inspired with the passion of Tawhīd, he headed towards the tree with an axe in order to chop it down. He could not tolerate to let people worship anyone other than Allah. He was heading forward to chop down the tree with the very same intention. On the way he was met by the cursed Satan in human disguise who asked him, 'Where are you going so furiously?' The Muslim replied, 'I am going to chop down that tree which is being worshipped.' On hearing this, the cursed Satan answered, 'When you do not worship the tree yourself then what harm are those people causing you by worshipping it? Change your decision and go back.' The Muslim answered, 'I will definitely not return.' The issue got heated and Satan said, 'I will not let you cut down that tree.'

The dispute led to a physical fight which resulted in the Muslim defeating Satan. Then Satan said tempting the Muslim, 'Even if you cut down the tree how will it benefit you? I suggest that you refrain from cutting it, and if you do then you will find two dinar (gold coins) under your pillow every day.' The Muslim asked, 'Who will give me the two gold coins?' Satan answered, 'I promise you that every day you will find two gold coins under your pillow.' The man was persuaded by Satan's greed filled words and his greed for two gold coins made him change his mind about chopping down the tree, so he returned home.

When he awoke in the morning he found two gold coins under his pillow. The second morning when he lifted his pillow he did not see the coins. He became very angry, picked up his axe and headed to cut down the tree again. The devil appeared again as a human and asked, 'Where are you going?' He answered, 'I am going to chop down that tree which people are worshipping, I cannot tolerate that people worship something other than Allah, so I will not rest until

I have cut down the tree.’ Satan responded, ‘You are lying! Now you will never be able to cut down the tree.’ They both had a second fight, but this time Satan badly defeated the Muslim and began to strangle him until the man almost died. He asked Satan, ‘Tell me who are you?’ Satan replied, ‘I am Iblis, I am the same individual that stopped you the first time that you came to cut down the tree, but that time you defeated me because your anger then was for Allah ﷻ, but this time I defeated you because now your anger is not for Allah ﷻ, rather it is for not receiving those gold coins, so now you can never defeat me.’ (*‘Uyūn-ul-Ḥikāyat, story 110pp. 129*)

Dear Islamic brothers! Humans face a major test because being sincere whilst doing good deeds is extremely difficult. Satan plays so cunningly with a man’s intention that he does not even realise it and before he knows it he is defeated by Satan. This story also teaches us that whoever does Madanī work solely with the intention of pleasing Allah ﷻ receives divine assistance, but a person who intends to please other people does not. Sayyidunā Faqīḥ Abul Layṣ Samarqandī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهِ الْهَادِي said: Anyone who calls towards righteousness must intend to do this for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ and the rise of Islam, and not any personal motive because only with the intention of pleasing Allah ﷻ and strengthening Islam will he be granted the strength and divine assistance to complete this mission. If he has any personal motive behind this then Allah ﷻ will make him fail. (*Tanbīḥ-ul-Ghāfilīn, pp. 50*)

A few satanic tricks for destroying preachers

Here we will reveal a few successful tricks of Satan. Reading or hearing these could upset some people, in fact it could make them angry, and if anyone feels such emotions in his heart he should instantly recite ‘أَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ’ and pray to Allah ﷻ for protection from the evil of Satan.

Showing Off

1. Sometimes a preacher thinks to himself, My speeches are very good, why do people not compliment me? Why do they not praise me?
2. His heart begins to desire, people should stand up on my arrival because I am a preacher.
3. They should arrange distinguished seating for me.
4. The announcer should introduce me with noteworthy titles.
5. People should chant slogans to welcome me.
6. The listeners should exclaim ‘سُبْحَنَ اللّٰهُ سُبْحَنَ اللّٰهُ’ to compliment my speech.
7. They should put a flower garland around my neck.
8. People should flatter me.
9. I should be offered food.
10. If any sweets are distributed, in his heart he thinks, I should be given more than ordinary people.
11. I should at least be offered tea.
12. I should be offered money etc.

Touched a nerve

Dear Islamic brothers! I may have touched a nerve but please be fair – are all these desires not because you are privileged to be a ‘preacher’? Why do the listeners not desire these things? Why are you expecting some sort of reward or exchange for this great service from the public? When no one stands to welcome you, or no one provides you with facility of conveyance, makes you sit on a

distinguished seat, offers you tea, drink or food, then why do you get upset? What is it that you expect from these complaints? As some preachers say, *‘What can I do? I did not get a lift’*, or, *‘people did not even offer me any water’*, or *‘I even had to pay the fare for both sides myself’* etc.

The thief of the heart got caught

Dear Islamic brothers! Are these complaints not revealing the thief hidden inside your heart? That you did not preach to an audience for the sake of Allah ﷺ, but rather for fame, special treatment and compliments. Just look in the past at the character of our pious predecessors. Look at the severity of the difficulties that they endured whilst calling towards righteousness, and in spite of their patience they were extremely humble and fled from fame.

May Allah ﷺ protect us all from the previously highlighted thoughts which enter a preacher’s heart, and grant us sincerity. However if we gain any of these things without desiring them then this is not our fault. For example if someone offers us a ride without asking for it then it is fine for us to accept. The same applies to other forms of respect. Always warn your heart about the wrath of Allah ﷺ in these matters to save yourself from showing off.

Become an example of total humility

All those who have the passion to spread the beautiful Sunnaḥs of our Holiest Prophet ﷺ! Try to be humble in your pace, conversation and in whole character. Be humble for the sake of Allah ﷺ. *إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ*. success and greatness will automatically come to your feet. Whenever anyone invites you to deliver a speech then accept selflessly, unless you have a valid excuse not to. You

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must avoid the desire for people to offer transport arrangements for you and for you to be transported respectfully, rather you should make your own way there in order to preach the commandments of Allah ﷺ and the Sunnahs of His Beloved Prophet ﷺ.

Jis kā ‘amal ḥay bay-gharz us kī jazā kuch aur ḥay

He who acts selflessly his reward is something special

When the saints were invited they turned up unhesitatingly

When our saints رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى were invited to speak to any gathering they would reach there without hesitating. Sayyidunā Sufyān Ṣaurī رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى; when he visited Ramallah (Palestine), Sayyidunā Ibrāhīm Bin Adḥam عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى sent him a message saying that he wanted Sayyidunā Sufyān Ṣaurī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى to come and deliver a Ḥadīṣ lesson to the people. Someone said to Sayyidunā Ibrāhīm Bin Adḥam عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى, ‘You are requesting a great Ḥadīṣ expert, scholar and saint such as Sayyidunā Sufyān Ṣaurī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى to come to you!’ He replied, ‘Yes, I want to show you his extreme humility.’ Then Sayyidunā Sufyān Ṣaurī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى came and delivered a Ḥadīṣ lesson. (*Tanbīḥ-ul-Mughtarrīn, chapter 4, pp. 228*)

O our dear Allah ﷻ! Grant us sincerity in all our deeds and protect us from the despicable disease of showing off and grant us the ability to do every deed only for Your pleasure and make us amongst Your sincere bondmen.

أَمِينَ بِجَاهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأَمِينِ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Mayrā ḥer ‘amal bas Tayray wāṣṭay ḥo

Ker ikhlāṣ aysā ‘aṭā Yā Ilāhī

May every deed of mine be only for You

Grant me such sincerity O my Lord

9. I wore this garment for the pleasure of Allah ﷺ

Sayyidunā Dāwūd Ṭāī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ once wore a garment the wrong way round, when people asked him to wear it properly, he رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ replied, 'I wore it for the pleasure of Allah ﷺ so I will not change it.' (Tanbīh-ul-Mughtarrīn, pp. 26)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

10. Recompense for a good deed

A man bought a gift for Sayyidunā Sufyān Šaurī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ, but he رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ refused to accept it and said, 'I cannot take this gift from you, because maybe you learnt some knowledge from me and this gift is in exchange for that good deed, and I may not receive any reward (if I take the gift).' The man replied, 'Your honour! I have never gained any knowledge from you.' Sayyidunā Sufyān Šaurī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ responded, 'Yes, I remember! Your brother learnt religious knowledge from me.' He رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ said this and asked him to return. (Kīmiyā-e-Sa'ādat, vol. 2, pp. 700)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

11. Divine reward is enough

On the request of Khalifāh Abū Ja'far Maṣṣūr, Sayyidunā 'Abdur Raḥmān Bin 'Umar Awzā'ī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْقَوِي gave him some advice. When Sayyidunā Imām Awzā'ī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْقَوِي was about to return, the Khalifāh Maṣṣūr offered him some gifts and money etc., but the Imām refused to accept the offerings and said, 'I do not need these things, because I do not want to sell my religious advice in exchange

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for worthless worldly money (reward from my Lord عَزَّوَجَلَّ is enough for me).’ (*Uyūn-ul-Ḥikāyat, story 20, pp. 45*)

Mayrā ḥer ‘amal bas Tayray wāsiṭay ḥo

Ker ikhlāṣ aysā ‘aṭā Yā Ilāhī

May every deed of mine be only for You

Grant me such sincerity O my Lord

Dear Islamic brothers! Did you see how sensitive our saints رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى were with regard to being sincere in teaching, learning and preaching Islam? They would refuse to accept a gift from someone due to fear of it being a recompense for a religious service.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

12. Evil of sins

Sayyidunā Maṣṣūr Bin ‘Ammār عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى said, ‘I had a Muslim friend who admired me dearly. He visited me on every occasion of sadness and happiness. I believed that he was a very pious man who worshipped excessively, offered Taḥajjud, and wept excessively. I did not see him for some days and was informed that he had become very feeble. I discovered his address and knocked on his door. His daughter appeared and asked: ‘Who do you want to meet?’ I answered, ‘So and so.’ She returned inside to get permission for me to enter. A short while later she returned to the door and said, ‘Come inside.’ I entered and saw my friend lying in a bed in the centre of the house. His face was black, his eyes were blue, and his lips were fat. I said fearfully, ‘My dear brother! Recite لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ excessively.’ He opened his eyes and just about managed to turn and look at me and then fainted. I encouraged him to recite the Kalimah again and for a

second time he just about managed to open his eyes and look at me but then fainted again.

When I encouraged him a third time to recite the Kalimah, he opened his eyes and said, 'My dear brother! O Maṣṣūr! There is an obstruction between me and this Kalimah.' I said, 'لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ' where are those Ṣalāḥs, fasts, Taḥajjud and night prayers?' He sadly answered, 'My dear brother! All those deeds were not for the pleasure of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, but rather I did those good deeds so that other people considered me as a Namāzī, a fasting man, and one who offers Taḥajjud. I showed off when doing Ṣikr of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. When alone, I used to shut the door, remove my clothes and drink alcohol and confront my Creator عَزَّوَجَلَّ with disobedience. I did this for a long time and then I became fatally ill. I asked this daughter of mine to bring the Holy Quran to me, which she did. I recited every single letter of the Holy Quran, and when I reached Sūrah Yāsīn I raised the Holy Quran and implored Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ, 'O Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! For the sake of this Holy Quran, cure me – I will not sin again.' Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ then cured me.

When I got cured, I indulged in games, entertainment, desires and lust again. The cursed devil made me forget the promise that I made with my Creator عَزَّوَجَلَّ. I continued to sin for a long time, then suddenly I became ill with that same fatal illness again and was closed to death. I instructed my family to place me in the middle of the house according to my habit. I asked for the Holy Quran and raised it and implored, 'O Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! For the sake of that whose greatness is mentioned in this Holy Book, cure me from this illness.'

Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ accepted my prayer and cured me again, but again I returned to satisfying my desires and sins and now I am ill again. I instructed my family again to place me in the middle of the house

as you can see. When I asked them to bring me the Holy Quran to recite I could not recite a single letter. I realised that Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ is very displeased with me. I raised my head to the sky and begged, 'O Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! For the sake of the greatness of this Holy Quran! Please cure me from this illness.' I heard a voice from the unseen which spoke words of poetry whose summary is, 'When you are sick, you repent and when you are healthy, you indulge into sin again. For as long as you feel pain, you weep, but when you gain strength, you begin to do evil deeds. You suffered many problems and trials but Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ saved you from all of them. In spite of His prohibitions and warnings you remained drowned in sins and neglected Him for a long time. Did you not fear death? In spite of having intellect, you persistently disobeyed. You forgot the favour and grace of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ upon you. You never trembled or were afraid. So many times you made a promise to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and then broke it, in fact you forgot every good and virtuous thing. Before you depart from this perishing world know that your home is your grave which informs you of the advent of death every moment.'

Sayyidunā Manṣūr Bin 'Ammār عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمَا said: I swear by Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! I left him with tears in my eyes and before I reached the door of my house I heard news of his death. We pray to Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ for a good end because many fasting and praying at nights Muslims died with a bad end. (*Rauḍ-ul-Fāiq, Al-Majlis two, pp. 17*)

13. The fruit of a good intention and the harm of a bad intention

It is reported that there were once two brothers, one was a worshipper and the other a sinner. The worshipper desired to see Satan in the Miḥrāb. One day Iblīs came to him in human's disguise and said, 'How foolish you are! You wasted forty years of your life

imprisoning your Nafs and exerting physical pressure upon your body. You have as much of your life left as has passed, so satisfy the desires of your Nafs and enjoy yourself, then you can repent later and start worshipping again. Indeed Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) is Forgiving and Merciful.' On hearing this, the worshipper thought in his heart, 'I would go downstairs and fulfil my desires and enjoy the next twenty years of my life with my brother and then I would repent and spend the last twenty years of my life in worship.' So he began to walk downstairs.

On the other hand his sinful brother was thinking to himself, 'You have wasted your life in sins. Your brother will reach Paradise and you will reach Hell. I swear by Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) I will surely repent and spend the rest of my life worshipping with my brother upstairs. May be Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) will forgive me.' This brother began to walk upstairs with the intention of repentance whilst his other brother began to walk downstairs. Suddenly the pious brother slipped and fell upon the sinful brother, both died together on the stairs. Now the worshipper will be resurrected with his evil intention of disobedience and the sinner will be resurrected with his good intention of repentance.'

Dear Islamic brothers! Please prepare your hearts to take warning from the events occurring day and night. There were many people who were far from Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) but got close, and many close people went far. Their families and neighbours oppressed them. For the close ones is Paradise and for the far ones is Hell. O intellectual people! Take heed! Surely when the worshipper slipped, he would have cried over the changing of his intention and falling into sin and disobedience after worshipping. He loved Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ), but if his love was sincere then he would surely have returned to loyalty, he

will soon realise that he constructed his building on a fragile edge.
So O people of intellect! Take advice. (*Rauḍ-ul-Fāiq*, pp.16)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

14. Analysing a conversation

It is stated in *Minhāj-ul-‘Ābidīn* that once Sayyidunā Fuḍayl Bin ‘Iyāḍ met Sayyidunā Sufyān Šaurī رَحِمَهُمَا اللَّهُ تَعَالَى. After a long conversation Sayyidunā Sufyān Šaurī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى commented, ‘I consider today’s meeting to be the best one.’ Sayyidunā Fuḍayl Bin ‘Iyāḍ عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الرَّزَّاقِ responded, ‘I consider it a very dangerous meeting.’ Sayyidunā Sufyān Šaurī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى asked, ‘Why?’ Sayyidunā Fuḍayl Bin ‘Iyāḍ عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ الرَّزَّاقِ answered, ‘Were we both not beautifying our speech? Were we not burdening ourselves and showing off?’ On hearing this Sayyidunā Sufyān Šaurī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى began to cry.

(*Minhāj-ul-‘Ābidīn*, pp. 53, Beirut)

Dear Islamic brothers! Just think! The conversations of the saints of Allah were sincere and totally Islamic, but they cried due to the fear of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and they worried that they may have disobeyed Him.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

15. Who paid my debt?

On the way to Ṭarasūs in order to fight against the Romans, Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh Bin Mubārak عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى used to stay in an inn in the city of Raqqah. A young man would arrive and serve him, and also learn some Aḥādīṣ from him. One day the young man did not appear when he عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى reached there. The Shaykh was in a

hurry so he left for war with his army. After the battle, he returned and realised that the young man had been imprisoned by a creditor to whom he owed some money. The Shaykh asked, ‘How much is the debt?’ People answered, ‘Ten thousand dirhams (silver coins).’

At night he رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ summoned the lender and gave him ten thousand dirhams and made him swear that for as long as he (‘Abdullāh Bin Mubārak رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ) is alive he would not tell anyone about this and that in the morning the lender should free the young man. Then he رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ left. When the young man returned to the city after being freed, he learnt that the Shaykh had arrived and departed the last day. The young man left at the same time and a few miles later he met the Shaykh. The Shaykh asked, ‘Where were you? I did not see you at the inn?’ He replied, ‘Your honour! I was imprisoned due to a debt.’ He رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ asked, ‘How did you get free?’ The young man replied, ‘An anonymous person paid my debt for me so I was freed.’ The Shaykh advised, ‘O young man! Thank Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ gave someone the ability to pay your debt.’ It was not until the demise of the Shaykh that the young man discovered this favour. (*Tarikh-e-Baghdad, vol. 10, pp. 158*)

16. Do not make my name apparent

Sayyidunā Abū Ismā’il Bin Nujīd Nayshāpūrī عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ الْقَوِي was ‘Muḥaddīsh-e-Kabīr’ in the ‘science of Ḥadīṣ’, and ‘Shaykh-e-Akbar’ in Taṣawwuf, ‘Ibādāt’ and Ma’mulāt, and unique in his times in piety and abstinence and was a ‘true saint’ of his time. After seeing his miracles and qualities, people believed he was the ‘Abdāl’ of his era.

Sayyidunā Ibn Nujīd’s father was a very rich man and so he inherited a lot of money. However this possessor of the wealth of knowledge and piety spent all his gold and silver on scholars, Mashāikh and

students. In just a few days he رَحِمَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ spent his entire inheritance in the path of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. One day his Shaykh, Abū ‘Uṣmān Hīrī عَلَيْهِ رَحِمَهُ اللهُ الْقَوِيُّ, needed some money for supplies for soldiers. After failing to arrange the money from other sources the Shaykh asked Sayyidunā Ibn Nujīd رَحِمَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ to help. Instantly Ibn Nujīd رَحِمَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ brought bags of two thousand dirhams and placed them at the feet of his Shaykh. The Shaykh became very happy and publicised the matter in front of a large gathering, which made people cheer him. However Sayyidunā Ibn Nujīd رَحِمَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ was very sad and thought, ‘How sad! People have discovered my good deed.’ He رَحِمَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ disappointingly left the gathering.

A short while later he رَحِمَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ returned and said to the Shaykh in front of the gathering, ‘Your honour! Please return my money to me, since I no longer wish to spend it in the path of Allah now.’ The Shaykh instantly placed the bags of silver in front of Ibn Nujīd رَحِمَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ and Sayyidunā Ibn Nujīd رَحِمَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ took the bags home. The people in the gathering began to gossip amongst themselves. When night fell and the Shaykh was alone, Sayyidunā Ibn Nujīd رَحِمَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ came to the Shaykh again with the bags of two thousand dirhams and said, ‘My Shaykh! Please spend this money secretly and do not reveal my name to anyone.’ On hearing this, Shaykh Abū ‘Uṣmān عَلَيْهِ رَحِمَهُ اللهُ الرَّحْمَنُ began to cry and said, ‘Ibn Nujīd رَحِمَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ) I salute your courage a hundred times over.’

(Bistān-ul-Muḥaddiṣīn, pp. 252)

17. His generosity was discovered after his demise

Twice in his life Sayyidunā Imām Zayn-ul-‘Ābidīn رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ donated his entire wealth in the path of Allah. He رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ was so generous that he رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ used to send money to many poor residents of Madīnah without the recipients even realising where the money came

from. When he رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ passed away the poor discovered that this was all the generosity of Imām Zayn-ul-‘Ābidīn.

(*Siyar A’lām-un-Nubalā*, vol. 5, pp. 336-337)

18. Who shall I show off for?

The great Ḥadīṣ master Sayyidunā Muhammad Bin ‘Abdur Raḥmān عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى once visited someone. During the conversation the man said to him, ‘I think, I sense showing off and pretence in your deeds.’ Instantly he عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى picked a small piece of straw from the ground and said, ‘Who would I show off to with my deeds? I swear by Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! All worldly people of the entire earth are of worth less in my eyes than this splinter.’ (*Siyar A’lām-un-Nubalā*, vol. 7, pp. 110)

19. We do not sell Ta’wiz here

Sayyid Ayyūb ‘Alī Sahib stated that once a man brought an offering of a brand new pot of a sweet dessert. A’lā Ḥaḍrat عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى asked, ‘Why did you trouble yourself?’ The man answered, ‘I came to say Salām to you.’ A’lā Ḥaḍrat عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى responded to his Salām and then remained silent for a short while, after which he عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى asked, ‘Do you need anything?’ He responded, ‘Nothing, your honour! I only came to see how you were.’ A’lā Ḥaḍrat عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى replied, ‘Thank you.’ After another short silence, A’lā Ḥaḍrat عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى asked again, ‘Do you need anything?’ Again the man replied in the negative. Then A’lā Ḥaḍrat عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى instructed someone to take the sweet dish inside.

A short while later the man requested for a Ta’wiz. A’lā Ḥaḍrat عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى said, ‘I asked you three times whether you needed anything, but you did not answer! Fine, wait there.’ He عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى then had a Ta’wiz brought from his nephew, the late ‘Alī Aḥmad Khān, (who was appointed to write Ta’wizāt) and gave it to the man. As well as

this, A'lā Ḥaḍrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ indicated to Ḥājī Kifāyatullāh Sahib to bring back the pot of the sweet dish, and he رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ returned it with these words, 'Please take this pot back with you. We do not sell Ta'wīz here.' The man insisted with apology but A'lā Ḥaḍrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ refused. The man eventually left with his pot of dessert.

(Hayāt-e-A'lā-Ḥaḍrat, vol. 1, pp. 171)

سُبْحَانَ اللهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ! The great piety of A'lā Ḥaḍrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ! Even though that gift was not a payment for the Ta'wīz, and even if it was a payment, it is permissible to take a payment in exchange for giving a Ta'wīz, but his sincerity did not permit him to derive personal profit from a religious service and hence he رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ returned the offering.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

20. I do not sell knowledge

Sayyid Ayyūb 'Alī Sahib stated: Once A'lā Ḥaḍrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ said to Jahāngīr Khān Sahib Qādirī Razavī a resident of Maḥallāh Chaypī Tolaḥ and an oil merchant, 'I need some field oil.' Since he used to sell oil. So he brought the required amount, after A'lā Ḥaḍrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ enquired about the price, the merchant replied, 'The usual price is such and such, but your honour, you can give me less.' A'lā Ḥaḍrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ responded, 'Take from me what you take from other people.' He replied, 'No! Your honour, you are a respected figure and a scholar. How can I charge you the normal price?' A'lā Ḥaḍrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ replied, 'I do not sell knowledge.' Eventually he رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ paid Khān Sahib the normal price.

(Hayāt-e-A'lā-Ḥaḍrat, vol. 1, pp. 172)

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

21. I cannot sell admiration

In the early days of Dawat-e-Islami, wherever Amīr-e-Aḥl-e-Sunnat دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمُ الْعَالِيَهُ used to travel to deliver Sunnah-inspiring speeches there was an Islamic brother who would set up a perfume stall owned by Amīr-e-Aḥl-e-Sunnat دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمُ الْعَالِيَهُ which a lot of people were unaware of. Somehow, the Imām-e-Masjid discovered that Amīr-e-Aḥl-e-Sunnat دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمُ الْعَالِيَهُ made his own efforts to earn lawful provisions and did not run his house on charity. In a wave of passion, the Imām announced on the microphone that the perfume stall outside belonged to Amīr-e-Aḥl-e-Sunnat دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمُ الْعَالِيَهُ and that he strove to earn lawful sustenance and did not ask people for donations. Amīr-e-Aḥl-e-Sunnat دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمُ الْعَالِيَهُ was disturbed by this public announcement and thought, ‘May be people will buy things now out of admiration for me.’ That day whatever money he made on the stall he donated in the path of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ and said, ‘I cannot sell my admiration.’

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Prayer

O Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ! For the sake of Your Beloved and Blessed Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ fill our empty hands with the wealth of sincerity!

أَمِينَ بِجَاهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأَمِينِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

TRANSLITERATION CHART

ا	A/a	ڑ	Ř/ř	ل	L/l
ا	A/a	ز	Z/z	م	M/m
ب	B/b	ژ	X/x	ن	N/n
پ	P/p	س	S/s	و	V/v, W/w
ت	T/t	ش	Sh/sh		
ٹ	Ṭ/ṭ	ص	Ṣ/ṣ	ه / ه / ة	Ĥ/ĥ
ث	Ṣ/ṣ	ض	Ḍ/ḍ	ی	Y/y
ج	J/j	ط	Ṭ/ṭ	ے	Y/y
چ	Ch	ظ	Z/z	اَ	A/a
ح	H/h	ع	‘	اُ	U/u
خ	Kh/kh	غ	Gh/gh	اِ	I/i
د	D/d	ف	F/f	و مدہ	Ū/ū
ڈ	Ḍ/ḍ	ق	Q/q	ی مدہ	Ī/ī
ذ	Ẓ/ẓ	ک	K/k	ا مدہ	Ā/ā
ر	R/r	گ	G/g		

GLOSSARY

Note: This glossary consists of only an introductory explanation to Islamic terms. For thorough understanding, please consult some Sunnī scholar.

Du'a [دُعَا]: Supplication

Farḍ [فَرَض]: It is an obligation without performing which one cannot be freed from duty and if some act is Farḍ in worship, the worship will not be accomplished without performing that act. Not performing a Farḍ deliberately is a grave sin.

Ghusl [غُسْل]: Ritual bath

Hājī [حَاجِي]: One who has performed Hajj

Halāl [حَلَال]: Lawful (by Shari'ah)

Harām [حَرَام]: It is opposite of Farḍ; committing it deliberately even once is a grave sin.

Imām [إِمَام]: A Muslim who leads others in congregational Ṣalāh.

Īṣāl-e-Ṣawāb [إِيصَال نَوَاب]: Īṣāl-e-Ṣawāb refers to the act of spiritually donating the reward of virtuous deeds to the Muslims. Īṣāl-e-Ṣawāb may be made to all deceased and living male and female Muslims including even Muslim jinns. See its detailed method in the booklet '*Method of Fātiḥah*' published by Maktaba-tul-Madīnah.

Kanz-ul-Īmān [كَزَالِإِيمَان]: Name of the Urdu translation of the Holy Quran by Imām-e-Ahl-e-Sunnat, Al-Ḥāj, Al-Ḥāfiẓ, Al-Qārī Imām Aḥmad Razā Khān عَلَيُّو بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ الرَّزَّازِيِّ.

Makrūh [مَكْرُوهُ]: Disliked

Miskīn [مِسْكِين]: A Miskīn is the one who possesses nothing and has to beg others for food to satisfy hunger and clothes to cover the body. Begging is Ḥalāl (allowed) for him.

Muftī [مُفْتِي]: An authorized scholar who is expert in Islamic jurisprudence to answer religious queries.

Na'at [نَعْت]: Poetic eulogy in praise of the Prophet of mankind, the Peace of our heart and mind, the most Generous and Kind ﷺ

Nafl [نَفْل]: Supererogatory act / worship

Qiblah [قِبْلَه]: The direction which Muslims face during Ṣalāh etc.

Ṣadaqaḥ [صَدَقَه]: Charity or alms

Ṣalāt/Ṣalāt-‘Alan-Nabī [صَلَاةٌ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ ﷺ]: Supplication for asking blessings for the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Shar’i [شَرْعِي]: According to Sharī’ah

Sharī’at/Sharī’ah [شَرِيعَة]: Commandments of Allah عزوجل and His Noble Prophet ﷺ

Sūrah [سُورَة]: Chapter of the Holy Quran

Ummah [أُمَّة]: Believers of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as a whole

Wājib [وَاجِب]: It is an obligation without performing which one will not be freed from obligation and if a Wājib act is missed in worship, that worship will be considered defective; however the worship will be considered performed. Not performing a Wājib once deliberately is a minor sin and leaving it a few times is a grave sin.

Wuḍū [وُضُو]: Ritual ablution which is a pre-requisite for Ṣalāh, Ṭawāf and for touching the Holy Quran etc.

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